

Jordan insists on securing water rights in peace talks

AMMAN (Petra) — Any solution to the Jordanian-Israeli conflict in the Arab-Israeli bilateral talks will inevitably have to address Jordan's water shortage problem, Munther Haddadin, water expert and member of the Jordanian delegation to the Middle East peace talks, said Sunday.

In an interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Haddadin said article three of the agenda of the Jordanian-Israeli bilateral talks, which was concluded recently, states that both sides should get their legitimate share of water sources shared by them.

The issue will be discussed in official talks between the two sides as soon as the coming round of the Arab-Israeli bilateral talks starts, he said.

Dr. Haddadin said Jordan would focus in the negotiations on a sub-agenda which would include all the points related to the water of the Yarmouk and the Jordan rivers.

Jordan, he said, has rights to international rivers it is sharing with other countries in accordance with international charters. But, he added, the Jordan River's tributaries in Jordanian territory, south of the Yarmouk River, are internal valleys, whose water had been used since the 1950s to irrigate lands in the eastern Jordan valley, and thus, are considered Jordanian waters.

Reviewing Jordan's plans to exploit the Jordan River, Dr. Haddadin said Jordan has prepared a plan to use the river and its tributaries in 1939 and

the plan aimed mainly at irrigating lands in the eastern Jordan Valley. The plan was updated in 1950 for the same purpose.

On the other side of the river, before the establishment of Israel, the Jewish agency had drawn counterplans for the use of the Jordan River. Following the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948, Israel had drawn two more plans, he added.

The Israeli plans had always clashed with the Jordanian ones, and even the Israeli ambitions in Arab water had exceeded the borders of Palestine and included plans to use the Litani River in Lebanon, he said.

Dr. Haddadin noted that Israel draws water from the

Jordan River to the Palestinian coast for agricultural projects and even to the Negev Desert to reform lands while the Jordanian water plans have only concentrated on the use of the river's water in the Jordan Valley basin itself.

Israel's attempts to control Arab waters continued after 1967, when Israel occupied the West Bank and the Golan Heights, and the Israelis put under their control most of the Jordan River's sources and tributaries north of Tiberias Lake, he said.

He added that Israel also managed to control the sources of the Yarmouk River after the 1967 war, thus violating all international standards and charters on the use of joint water sources.

Agreement signed to restore and develop Islamic sites

AMMAN (Petra) — Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid Sunday signed an agreement with a representative of a local engineering group to prepare plans, designs and documents for developing and restoring areas where mosques and tombs of prophet Moham-mad's companions are located. Prince Ra'd, who chairs a Royal Committee in charge of restoration of the tombs and mosques of the Prophet's companions, said the project comes in response to His Majesty King Hussein's directives to develop and restore these places. Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Minister Abdul Salam Al Abbadi, who is also vice president of the Royal commission, said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the agreement covers two projects: The tombs of the Prophet's companions in South Jordan and Irbid's Grand Mosque.

The tombs development project includes restoration of the tombs and their sites in the south of Jordan and the construction of a new mosque in addition to setting up gardens and a new agricultural road linking the tomb sites with Mutah battle site, in Mazra.

Dr. Abbadi said the agreement covers three major areas:



Prince Ra'd, the minister of public and housing and other senior officials view designs for the restoration and development of Islamic sites (Petra photo)

The general structure plan, which involves infrastructure services and studies on the new constructions, including the construction of a new mosque in the tombs area and the construction of gardens and courts.

Dr. Abbadi noted that the agreement's duration is 48

weeks, and that the first tender will be floated in August.

On the development of Irbid Grand Mosque, Dr. Abbadi said the project includes the preparation of studies and designs for the mosques area and new facilities attached to it.

Tender for the development of this mosque will be floated in June, according to Dr. Abbadi.

The signing ceremony was attended by Public Works and Housing Minister Abdul Razzaq Ensour and Awqaf Secretary-General Ahmad Helayel.

Potash company unveils expansion plans

GHOR AL SAFI (Petra) — The Arab Potash Company (APC) has prepared an investment and production plan until the year 2000 and the APC board has endorsed the investment programme and the capital spending totalling JD 380 million according to APC chairman Ali Ensour.

The 1994 budget estimated that JD 73.3 million would finance production expenses on the basis that APC will this year produce 1.6 million tonnes of potash yielding a pre-tax profit of JD 21.1 million.

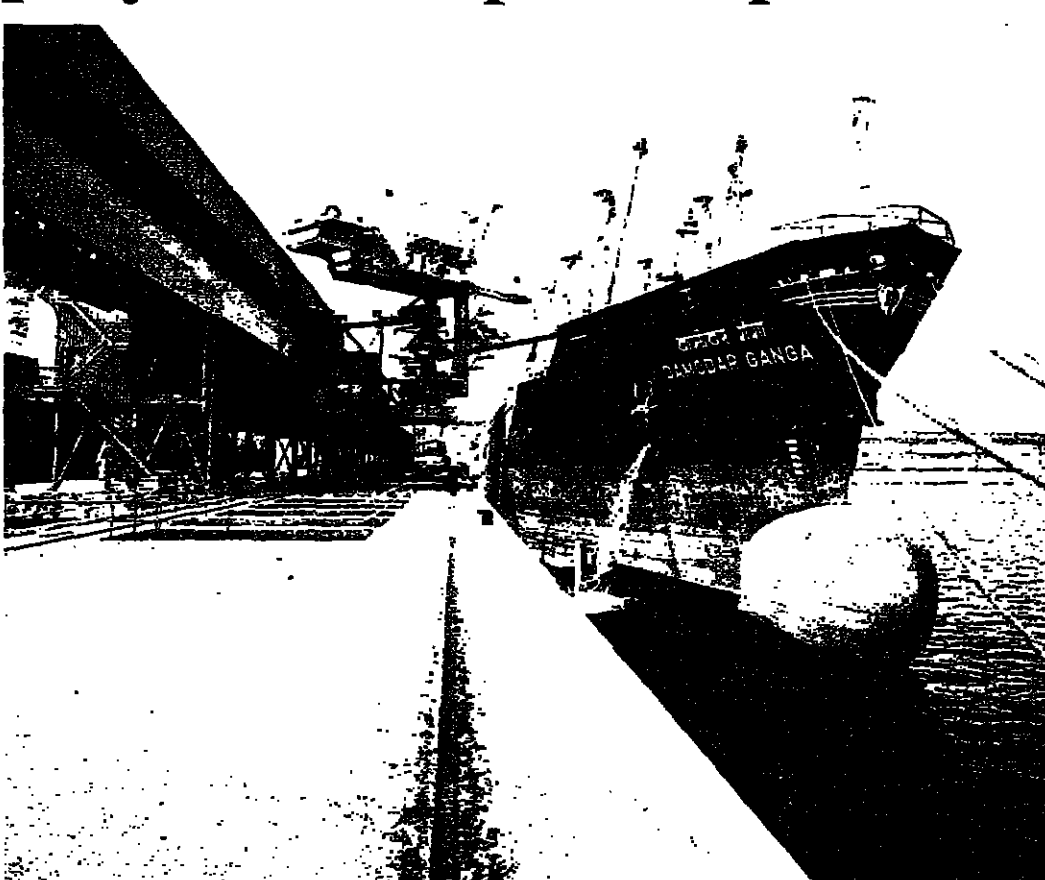
Capital spending was estimated at JD 79.8 million in 1994 to cover the cost of financing the expansion project and the commencement of work on chemical industries according to Mr. Ensour, who was addressing a press conference here Saturday.

The capital expenditure will cover upgrading the machinery and other equipment used in the production of potash, with the aim of raising production capacity to JD 1.8 million tonnes annually.

Mr. Ensour noted that work on expanding the facilities to increase production was expected to end in the first half of this year.

Under the plan, noted Mr. Ensour several types of chemical industries will be carried out in cooperation with a specialised American firm and the Jordanian private sector.

APC, he pointed out, follows a system by which strict



A ship loads Jordanian potash at Aqaba (file photo)

control over the operations and expenses is adopted in order to be able to compete with other world producers of potash. He noted that the price of potash has dropped by 20 per cent from 1992 levels.

APC Managing Director

Suleiman Hawari said the general investment and production plan took into consideration that the potash production volume would become 1.5 million tonnes to be sold to other countries at the rate of \$85 per tonne.

He said APC expects the construction of additional facilities would be completed by the end of 1997.

He added that the APC board expects an overall revenue of JD 89 million at the end of this year.

Al Aswaq selects Prince Hassan 'man of the year'

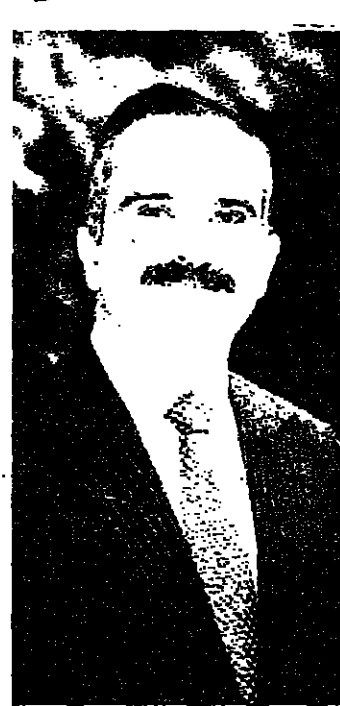
AMMAN (J.T.) — Al Aswaq Arabic Daily has chosen His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan as the "1993 man of the year" for his outstanding performance in a number of areas.

A 15-member selection panel, comprising the newspaper's editorial board and well-known academics, have identified five areas among others where Prince Hassan's performance was outstanding. These areas include: the Crown Prince's understanding of the historical context as a complete whole and avoiding selectivity in adopting positions and his ability to achieve the major goal of the national economic reform programme which resulted in an international consent to reduce Jordan's foreign debt.

In this context, the newspaper cited the Crown Prince's talks with the American administration, the World Bank,

the International Monetary Fund and his meetings with the European Community and Japanese officials, on Jordan's indebtedness.

Prince Hassan's ability to penetrate the siege which Jordan has been subjected to over the past three years, through the different meetings of the Arab Thought Forum was also another area where Prince Hassan's performance was outstanding, the paper said. The other points of strength included the Crown Prince's concept of comprehensive security which combines both political and economic agendas. Al Aswaq also noted in particular Prince Hassan's performance in dealing with the Palestinian people and addressing the issue of Jerusalem, as well as his daily demonstrations of democratic work and institutional mentality.



Arab interior ministers meet

AMMAN (Petra) — Interior Minister Salameh Hamad left Amman for Tunisia Sunday to head Jordanian's delegation to the meetings of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers due to open Monday.

In a statement prior to his departure, Mr. Hamad said the council's meeting was of extreme importance because of the current situation prevailing in the Arab region and the efforts being exerted to mend Arab rifts.

The Arab interior ministers, he said, would discuss in their three-day meetings several issues, mainly an Arab agreement on combating drug trafficking which was prepared by a committee of Arab lawyers and specialists in order to be adopted by all Arab countries.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Princess Wijdan opens exhibition

IRBID (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan Ali Sunday opened an art exhibition by Jordanian artist Basem Badarnah at Irbid's Tareq Ben Ziyad Park. The exhibition, which will last for several days, includes paintings depicting natural sites and traditional life in Jordan. Princess Wijdan also chaired a meeting at the park for the founding constituency of the Irbid Haya Centre. Princess Wijdan stressed at the meeting the need to prepare a clear philosophy outlining the goals of the centre.

Amalreh opens art exhibition

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputising for the minister of culture, the ministry's Secretary-General Mohammad Naji Amalreh Sunday opened an art exhibition by the Sudanese artist Abdul Qader Al Bakhit held at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC). On display are 40 paintings reflecting daily life in the Arab and Islamic world in general, and Sudan in particular.

University to take part in meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Al Al Bait University will take part in the first meeting on developing resources of Islamic architecture and arts, organised by the Aghakhan Programme for Islamic Architecture and Art of Harvard University. The meeting will be held in Istanbul next week. Representing the university at the meeting will be Mohammad Al Assad from the Higher Institute for Islamic Architecture and Art.

PLA commander congratulates King

AMMAN (Petra) — Commander of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) in Jordan, Abdul Rahim Qudsih, Sunday sent a cable to His Majesty King Hussein, congratulating him on the new year and voicing pride in the King's honourable stands towards the Palestinian people. Brigadier Qudsih voiced appreciation for King Hussein's continuous support for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and for his stand towards Jerusalem.

Municipality lights 40 kilometres of roads

AMMAN (Petra) — The municipality of Greater Amman Saturday lit 40 kilometres as part of the municipality's plans to light main roads. According to Greater Amman Mayor Mamdouh Al Abbadi, more roads will be lit during the first three months of this year. The total cost of the road electrification project is JD 1.4 million, he said.

Sunday is a religious holiday

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will observe Al Israa Wal Mi'raj anniversary, which commemorates the day when Prophet Mohammad ascended to heaven, Sunday Jan. 9. In observance of the occasion, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali, issued a communique ordering the closure of all government departments, ministries and public institutions.

Police investigating 'mysterious' death of 28-year-old man

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Police in Ghor Al Safi are investigating the possibility of a 28-year-old man being killed on New Year's eve.

A.A.M. was declared dead upon arrival to Ghor Al Safi Hospital of head injury.

A close friend of the victim, identified as T. N., told the police that he had invited the victim for dinner at one of their friends' house on New Year eve. After dinner the group had some drinks to celebrate the new year and then they all went to sleep, according to the police report.

T.N. told the police he went to wake A.A.M. the next morning and discovered that "he was in a coma". A.A.M. was carried to Ghor Al Safi Hospital

by civil defence officers but was pronounced dead upon arrival.

Preliminary investigations by police said the friends of the victim were surprised of his death, because, they said, the victim had no enemies and he was liked by everyone. Police are investigating the case.

Man gets shot

In another case, a 48-year-old man was carried to Jordan University Hospital, Friday, after being shot accidentally by a group of people celebrating the new year's day, according to a police report.

M.A.S. told police that after eating dinner at Al Humar Park he went to buy cigarettes when he was shot accidentally by a group of people who were celebrating the new year in an area nearby.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ☆ Art exhibition by artist Sadik Kwaish entitled "Talisma" at Baladna Art Gallery.
- ☆ Art exhibition by Jordanian artist Suha Mash'al at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ☆ Art exhibition by Iraqi artist Abdul Jabbar Salman on bedouin culture at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ☆ Exhibition on the 100th anniversary of the death of French novelist Guy De Maupassant at the French Cultural Centre.
- ☆ Exhibition of Iraqi books at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ☆ Art exhibition by a number of Jordanian artists entitled "The Sixth Exhibition — Samples From The Contemporary Jordanian Art 93" at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- ☆ Exhibition "Prints and Drawings of Fakhrelnissa Zaid" (1915-1991) until the 15th of January '94 at Darat al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "Permanent" Exhibition. (Tel. 6432512).

FILM AND DRAMA

- ☆ Film entitled "The Wall" at the Phoenix Gallery, for Art and Culture at 6:00 p.m.
- ☆ Drama for children entitled "The Question" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

King: Jordan resisting pressures

(Continued from page 1)

unexpected visit on Thursday.

"We told him it was the last chance from our side, and after that let each side carry the responsibility on his own," the King said.

King Hussein also said that he had asked Mr. Arafat to stop referring to a future Jordanian-Palestinian confederation.

Mr. Arafat, who had kept the Kingdom and his other Arab partners in the dark over the secret talks with Israel that led to the Sept. 13 self-rule accord, has been arguing that Jordan should not worry about his moves since a confederation is the ultimate goal.

"I have requested my brother (Arafat) to drop the expression of confederation from his dictionary and not to discuss it in any form or manner," said the King.

King Hussein said the shape of Jordanian-Palestinian relations was an issue for the future. "Our enemies and ignorant elements as well as other parties have exploited the talk of confederation to undermine the special (Jordanian-Palestinian) relationship."

"Jordan can only support the PLO with all its energies if there is a clearly defined path which means that commitment is commitment... and not in a whirlwind of talk that does not produce real results," King Hussein said.

The King said the PLO leader promised him PLO-Jordanian committees set up before the PLO-Israel accord but never activated would begin meeting on Tuesday.

"I don't know... but I pray to God the brothers will be up to the level needed, I advised them lately and tried telling them that the situation has changed," he said.

The King also rejected reports that Jordan favoured continued Israeli control of crossing points between the Kingdom and the West Bank.

he said. "It is not logical that Jordan wants Israeli control over the bridges (across the River Jordan) and the crossing points."

Following are major excerpts from the King's speech:

We are doing everything possible along with other Arab states to deal with outstanding issues with the aim of achieving security, stability and peace.

We are therefore reexamining everything in the light of our means and our potentials, and the chances for this aim are feasible and could help to attain development. Therefore, the study of the situation is continuing on our side in cooperation with the other parties.

In a quick review of the past, the Kingdom, since its creation, has been striving to achieve the best for the Arabs because it is part of this nation facing tragedies and sharing with Arab countries their catastrophes.

It defended the Palestinian land and people with the country's Armed Forces taking part in the 1948 and 1967 wars helping to save the major part of Palestinian land left for the

Palestinian people.

There were attempts to marginalise the role of the Armed Forces, but all these attempts have failed. In the 1950s the Jordanian Armed Forces were Arabised when changes were introduced to the army's leaders to play a leading role in Arab efforts to liberate Arab lands.

In 1967, and after the first Arab summit in Cairo, the PLO was born, Jordan was facing continued Israeli aggression allegedly in reply to Jordanian attacks coming from Jordan. Therefore we reached an understanding for collective Arab action in defence of Arab lands. We expressed that any aggression on any Arab state should be confronted by the Arab countries together.

The eyes are now focused on the Jordanian-Palestinian relations which have been distinguished relations over the years. But hostile forces, including Arab forces and Palestinians as well, striving to sow seeds of dissent and discord, adversely affecting the bilateral relations.

In my belief, had we not entered the 1967 war, an inter-

nal explosion would have occurred and then the chance would have opened for Israel to occupy this country.

Since the 1967 war, we have been struggling to regain the lost lands first through a joint Arab command, and we were told that we should struggle to regain the West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza. Arab leaders agreed that no single Arab country should reach a separate peace with Israel but through a comprehensive solution on all tracks.

We are trying hard to regain the occupied territories and not to be left under international supervision, but regrettably the PLO was chosen in 1974 to serve as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. In other words, the PLO have replaced Jordan to deal with the question of regaining the occupied lands.

When the question of peace was put forth for discussion we entered the process under a joint Jordanian-Palestinian umbrella to see that U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 implemented but with the separate Israeli-PLO deal we had to cast off the idea of joint delegation because there was no need to continue the joint effort. So as to remain committed to the Arab summit decision of 1974 of giving the PLO the sole right to deal with the issue, we decided to support the PLO leadership's agreement concluded in Oslo.

Peace is not a matter of ink on paper or a document signed before the negotiations start. We should discuss everything and once we have reached an acceptable and reasonable result, the peace that we seek would have been achieved.

We face Israeli pressure but we will not succumb to what we see as unjust. We will bow only to Almighty God.

We will continue to provide backing to the Palestinian people but we cannot keep moving in a vicious circle without any objective and we should follow a course that is clearly defined which also should meet commitments.

Kaddoumi to lead PLO team

(Continued from page 1)

sides will need to iron out.

The PLO leadership was supposed to decide this week on how to deal with a draft economic agreement that defines Jordan's role and relationship with the West Bank and Gaza Strip during the interim period.

Mr. Arafat has been hesitant to sign the agreement lest Israel could use it to turn down his demand for setting up an independent Palestinian central bank as a symbol of Palestinian sovereignty.

Jordanian officials, however, do not accept this argument. They point out that in the absence of a clear provision in the agreement giving monetary powers to the Palestinian authority, the Palestinians would have practically to choose between total control by the Israeli central bank or

an agreement with the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ).

In his comments on Jordan Television Sunday, Dr. Anani referred to Jordan's stand towards a peace treaty with Israel.

He said King Hussein's vision and foresightedness have always proved valid in most cases if not all the time.

A peace treaty could be signed only when all issues of concern, including water, people, refugees, security and displaced persons, are settled.

"It is then, when we become sure that peace will be comprehensive and just, talk about a peace treaty will have a meaning," Dr. Anani said.

"King Hussein has always called for rallying Arab ranks and mobilising Arab resources to serve the battle for peace, and make the Israeli power unable to dominate the great Arab circle," Dr. Anani said.

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Finally, some response

PLO CHAIRMAN Yasser Arafat has every right to demand and work for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; and, we think, his people will eventually get what they want. But he must have realised by now that for the Israelis to agree to such an eventuality, and for the world community to bless it, the PLO leader needs to play his cards right, wait for a while and give priority to building Palestinian institutions that would be mature and healthy enough to deliver such a state.

In undertaking this major task, Mr. Arafat cannot afford to alienate everybody he knows. There are a few toes around, anyway, that he can step on. On the other hand, he has every reason to cultivate the support of especially those who are most ready and willing to help him achieve full rights. Jordan is on top of the list of those countries which not only back the PLO-Israel agreement, but whose national security also depends on the success of the accord. True, Jordan is not yet ready to discuss a confederation with Chairman Arafat, simply because such a link can take place only between sovereign states, but there is no question that the Kingdom is fully committed to helping our Palestinian brethren in their quest for realising their legitimate rights, including self-determination and statehood.

Jordan, however, has its own interests, which, incidentally or otherwise, in no way clash with Palestinian aspirations for independence. Furthermore, what the leadership of this country has been asking of the PLO leader is no more than what Mr. Arafat himself has been demanding of other Arabs, namely coordination and cooperation on vital issues.

It was the Palestinians who insisted right from the beginning of the Madrid talks in the fall of 1991 on full coordination among the Arab parties to the peace process: Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians. As a result of its secret agreement with Israel the PLO managed to alienate Syria and, by extension, Lebanon. Jordan, as the PLO is fully aware, has not taken such a position. To the contrary, it has forgiven Mr. Arafat for reaching a separate deal with Israel, and His Majesty the King went as far as congratulating the PLO leader on his courage in reaching the Oslo accords.

But while Mr. Arafat might understandably be occupied with everything under the sun, he must remember that the mind of the Jordanian leadership is set on guarding the real interests of an Arab state, whose wellbeing is of vital interest to the cause of Palestine. Whatever agreement the Palestinians reach or fail to reach with the Israelis is going to have its consequences on Jordan. Therefore, coordination among the two parties is not a luxury, it is a necessity. The Palestinian leadership certainly realises that it has a stake in a strong Jordan both during the transitional period and afterwards. And that is why the arrival here this week of a delegation to start real coordination should be such a welcome change.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON the beginning of a new year, Al Ra'i Arabic daily said we had thought 1993 would carry with it peace in our region, but the year has passed by without the fulfilment of our aspirations and hopes. We had thought the year 1993 would end on a positive note and would witness real progress in the peace negotiations with Israel, but these hopes have been dashed, largely due to Israel's intransigence, the paper continued. Contrary to these hopes of the Palestinians and the Arabs in general nothing was achieved and no progress was ever attained, added the paper. Arab negotiators last year were involved in extensive talks with the Israelis in Washington and other parts of the world, but all their efforts have gone in vain due to Israel's adamant stand, according to the paper. The result is that all these endeavours have ended in naught, to the great frustration of the Palestinians in the first place, added Al Ra'i. On the other hand, Arab leaders are still at odds and their countries are ignoring the fact that only through solidarity they can regain their usurped rights and occupied lands, the paper pointed out. At present, the Arab states are in need of solidarity at a time when they are trying to cope with the so-called new world order and Israel's aggression on and occupation of Arab land, said the paper. This is happening at a time when Iraq remains suffering from the U.N.-imposed sanctions, exposing the people to further sufferings, it argued. The paper said that there is no alternative to solidarity and serious efforts to end this situation in 1994.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily discussed the plight of Al Muhajireen District, near Ras Al Ain — one of the oldest districts of Amman — which is threatened to be demolished soon by Amman Municipality under the excuse of developing that part of the capital. Is demolishing of 86 homes, 30 stores, two schools, a factory and an old mosque a civilised way to achieve development, asked Isam Qadmani. Years back, the municipality cleared the way for the capital to stretch westwards, only to discover later that by doing so Jordan had lost valuable agricultural land that used to contribute to food production, said Qadmani.

Islam — a religion, a political force and more

By Izzat R. Dajani

MOST COUNTRIES in the Middle East have transformed from certain traditional societies to relatively modern societies. This came about as a result of the 19th and 20th century imperialism and economic change. No allowance was made then for the incorporation of Islamic political movements in this modernisation process, leading to a diminished role of Islam in public life. People identified their political aspirations in national rather than religious expressions, leaving to Islam the role of personal faith. This led to the emergence of Islamic political movements that rejected the separation between religion, nationality and state. They further demanded the return to the comprehensive Islamic state as a representation of their political, religious and social identity. The intelligentsia and the urban lower classes were among those groups that found great appeal in these movements. They wanted to change the world they lived in. They made Islam as their way of life, the expression of one's self and the superordinate of all their goals and aspirations.

Islam regulates life and makes society. It cares for its individuals and is amenable to assign them different roles in life. The state draws its strength and power from Islam. The Islamic empire that extended from the Pyrenees to the Himalayas was a result of the unity of spirit and self in every Muslim. "Islam was the essential factor, the only bond to unify the people, the Muslims, and if this bond became the focus of their lives and loyalty, forces of solidarity would emerge and make possible the creation of a strong state," Al Afghani wrote.

In order to understand the influence of Islam over politics, it is imperative to be able to appreciate the history of the birth of Islam and its evolution. Islam has thirteen centuries of history. The Koran is the Holy Book and is a collection of all revelations that God bestowed upon Muhammad, the Prophet. The words of God constitute the message intended for the people of God. The Sunna is the "example" of the Prophet. It was also understood by some Muslims as the family of the Prophet, which led in turn to the largest degree of disagreement in the Islamic community. They wanted the family of Prophet Muhammad to continue leading the Muslims after his death. The majority of Muslims, however, saw in this a contradiction to Islamic principles whereby

the community ruled by Ijma'a (consensus). Ali, Prophet Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law by his marriage to Fatima, was the father to Muhammad's only two grandsons to reach maturity, Hasan and Hussein. When Prophet Muhammad died, the Muslims appointed Abu Bakr as Caliph (ruler) by Ijma'a, rejecting the rule by kinship to the Prophet, as in Ali's case. Then came Umar, followed by Othman, and eventually Ali became Caliph. The descendants of Ali kept a special standing in the Muslim World. They were distinguished and held in great esteem and respect, as their ancestors extended back to Ali's sons and hence to Prophet Muhammad. Their role in Islamic history is important and the living examples today are Hussein (the King of Jordan) and Hassan (the King of Morocco). By opposing the transition of power outside the dynasty of Muhammad, Shi'ism came into being and became the symbol of opposition to claims to legitimacy and state. The majority of Arabs remained to be Sunnis, and hence the Shiites concentrated their influence on non-Arab Muslims, as in Iran today.

Iran's fundamentalism and Islamic militancy constitute the best living example of Shiite rejection of the authority of secular governments. Shi'ism articulated social discontent and political protest. It saw itself as representing the persecuted minority. The Shiites believed they were the righteous few dominated by the wrongful majority. The Koran was passed on to them by the Prophet and the 12 Imams (successors to the Prophet). They have a special knowledge of the Holy Book and the martyrdom of their first leader, Hussein, is their model of self-sacrifice. This has become their means for achieving Islamic goals. The religious leaders in present day Iran expressed this fully in their war with Iraq and in their presence in some parts of Lebanon (offering financial and logistic help to Lebanese Shiites). "Since Iran is the only state to have begun to implement 'true' Islam, it is thought to be the world's only legitimate state, with a unique obligation of facilitating the worldwide implementation of Islamic law. Force and violence are not only acceptable but necessary means of doing so," the International Herald Tribune commented on Oct. 18, 1984.

Saudi Arabia is the other extreme to Iran's Shi'ism. It is the place where Prophet Muhammad was born and from where Islam had

spread. The Koran is the constitution and the Sharia's (Islamic law) is the country's source of laws and regulations. To Saudis, Islam is the political-religious base from which their identity is expressed. Saudi Arabia commands a special status to more than 800 million Muslims in the world today.

The effect of Islam is best expressed by the presence of the ulama (religious scholars) and their public forum every Friday. They hold very influential views that can effect social, political, economical and cultural issues. They have access to the highest authority and can exert a lot of power. Islam in Saudi Arabia is a way of life in every respect. It characterises the religious life of every Muslim. Saudi foreign policy and international behaviour are examples of the role Islam plays in Saudi Arabia political moves. The Islamic conference is also of great importance and reflects a great deal of Saudi "nationalist-religious" attitude and aspirations. The International Islamic Conference in Mecca in 1962 declared: "Those who disavow Islam and distort its call under the guise of nationalism are actually the most bitter enemies of the Arabs whose glories are inseparable from the glories of Islam." However, Saudi Arabia remains to be an authoritarian government irrespective of its Islamic teachings. Secular influences are present in the country, leaving a wide gap between the official political stance and daily activity. Social and religious tensions are surfacing more and more. The Saudi royal family draws its authority and legitimacy from its custodianship of the two holy mosques. This is another classical case of Islam politicisation.

The Middle East is a reservoir for the writings and influences of many thinkers and idealists. They mostly seem to either have emerged from or expressed their thoughts in Egypt or the Fertile Crescent. Two opposing and different characteristics prevail in the Middle East. The modernisation process is faced with a growing power in calling for the return to Islamic values. These values have different effects on different nations. These are further complicated by the presence of widely differing social classes with opposing ideologies as to what constitutes the basis for nationalism: Arab unity or Islam.

It is important to note that Islam was politicised from its early days as the Islamic calendar started its first year when the Muslims left Mecca for Medina to become a political community. To be a Muslim is to

join this community that constitutes a society operating according to God's revelations to Prophet Muhammad. "Muslims society has a remarkable solidarity; the loyalty and cohesion of its members are intense. A good Muslim is not one whose belief conforms to a given pattern, but one whose commitment may be expressed in practical terms that conform to an accepted code," Wilfred Smith wrote in 1957.

The Abbasid dynasty ruled from Baghdad over a great empire. The spread of its political authority over a vast geographical area led to eventual decentralised power structures and political units. Baghdad fell in the 13th century, and the empire came to its end. Then came the Ottoman (Turkish) rule which found in Islam, and in remaining religious, the key factor of survival as a political entity. World War I made it possible for Arab nationalists to demand independence from the Ottoman rule. But whenever Arab lands were "liberated", they were placed under foreign colonisation, and were made into small and weak states, depriving the Arabs of their promised unity. Had nationalism been allowed to mature peacefully and slowly without foreign intervention, its trends and character would have assumed a different form. Islam was criticised by the West as being backward and unable to cope with modern advancements in science and technology. The West failed to understand the powerful political weapon that Islam possessed. This, in part, led to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in which there was a call for the return to the old teachings of Islam, in the face of the "modern" powers.

Al Afghani (who lived in Egypt 1871-1879) called for the unity of Muslims so they could build up strength against the European powers. He attacked the weak governments of the Muslim community, as they became exploited and weak. This can be seen as a clear moment of awakening to Islam as a political power and can be an indication of the arousal of militancy in Islam in the face of corrupt rulers and foreign influences. Pan-Islamism became the focus for the politicised Islam and called for all devout Muslims to adhere to the principles of Islam as a means of strength, unity and identity.

Rasid Rida (1865-1935) was a strong believer in Arab nationalism; he differentiated between the "Arab Muslim", Umma (nation) and the Muslim Turks. He spoke of the Arabs being responsible for the spread and glory of Islam. Sati' Al Husri concentrated

his efforts and intellectualism on the compatibility of Arab nationalism and Islam, in which the former would support and promote the latter.

The language in which Islam was revealed was Arabic, Islam provides the Arab society with its spiritual message that can transform it into a force for the progress towards Arab nationalism. It is important to mention that Islam was born as a world-transforming religion and became embodied into the Arab societies of the Middle East, not in a religious capacity alone, but as a way of life and a political expression of one's thoughts. "Islam is inseparable from Arab nationalism and it is the duty of all Arab nationalists to uphold and venerate it and to sanctify the memory of Prophet Muhammad and interest themselves in Islam," Constantin Zuriaq, a Christian Arab nationalist wrote in 1939 in Beirut.

Increased nationalism was further expressed by many non-Muslim thinkers, writers and intellectuals. Khalil Iskandar Qubrusi, a Christian Orthodox, wrote that primitive Christianity which had originated in the East was corrupted by the Europeans who were seeking to dominate the Eastern Christians. "Arab Christians need to return to their pure original Christianity," he concluded.

Today, the Arab World is governed by different political systems. Where political parties are absent, Islam takes the form of the "unofficial" people's party. It becomes the forum for expression of the nation's demands. In Jordan, the Islamic movement won a large share of the seats in Parliament during the Nov. 1989 elections. The Jordanian elections for the professional unions are run on secular and Islamic grounds, with a clear tilt of power for the latter during the last ten years. Further classical examples can be drawn from Algeria, Sudan and many others.

In summation, the words of Roy Muttahedei at Harvard University provide the best analysis for present day Islam: "Most Muslims came to see the utility of a clear distinction between the actual and the ideal. They were willing to live with their actual, very imperfect governments as long as they could cherish their ideal. This ideal preserved a sense of community that could survive repeated changes of governments and conflicts of interest among Muslims. This sense of community even in the face of the terrifically powerful and divisive force of modern nationalism, is very much alive today."

Flirting with the fiscal sin

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

WHEN THE Jordanian government indulged in foreign borrowing for the past ten years or more, politicians used to calm down those scared of an approaching crisis and assure them that our Arab brethren in particular, and our international friends in general, would never allow a small, friendly country like Jordan to reach the point of crisis. At the last moment they claimed, massive foreign and Arab aid will flow to the country from Arab oil producing countries, the Americans, and others. A simple turn in the Gulf capitals will do the trick.

When the crisis did come, late in 1988, none of the above could care less. We found no alternative but to submit to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) demands. Politicians and decision-makers were obviously dead wrong, but the entire people of Jordan paid the price of that fatal mistake and are still paying.

After this bitter experience, we still have some people who dare tell us that foreign grants are definitely coming, irrespective of our economic behaviour. If we abandon the economic adjustment programme, they theorise, American, European, and Japanese financial assistance will not be affected, because their assistance is based on political considerations.

Lately we were told that we should not be afraid of increasing the salaries of the civil servants, or widening the deficit, because the IMF is committed to reschedule all our debts and to finance our foreign exchange gap. In other words, we can spend generously to satisfy our social needs because the funds will be secured whether the deficit is small or big.

If we deprive the government employees of a desirable salary increase, we only spare the IMF's money.

Such false and irresponsible talk may find some happy audience because it rids some of the guilt of committing their sin. But does this argument make sense? Why should the donors give us their tax-payers' money, irrespective of our financial behaviour and why should they try to help us if we are not ready to help ourselves? Why should the IMF cover the gap in our foreign exchange budget if we do not adhere to our own commitments under the programme, including reduction of budget deficit on yearly basis? Is the IMF so naive?

The fiscal target for 1993 was a reduction of deficit to the level of 6.4 per cent of the GDP. However, favourable circumstances made it possible to beat the target and reduce the deficit to 6.2 per cent of the GDP. As a reward for this achievement, the reduction of the deficit in 1994 was targeted at 5.2 per cent of GDP. Jordan's effort for the year 1994 is to be 1 per cent of GDP — which is, by no means, a tough job to accomplish.

The draft budget of 1994 was based on satisfying this requirement. According to other ways of reading the budget, the deficit may be a little bit higher and the Ministry of Finance should exert extra efforts during the year to make the actual performance better than the budget and the deficit no more than 5.2 per cent of the GDP.

It is on this background that the idea of yet another salary increase came, which, if implemented, will raise the deficit to 7.7 per cent of the GDP. One would be unrealistic to expect the IMF to go to Paris Club next month to put pressure on creditors to postpone or reduce their debts in order to enable the government of Jordan to enhance the life style of its ministers and improve the standard of living of its inflated bodies of civilian and military personnel, who got their last increase seven months ago, and to boost the popularity of the government, the deputies, and some press commentators.

Unfortunately, the government issued the wrong signal and unnecessarily created expectations, but the damage did not happen yet and it should find a way out of this mistake. Both the government and the Parliament should act responsibly.

Many Gazans sceptic negotiations are solution

By Samia Nakhoul
Reuters

GAZA — PLO leader Yasser Arafat's plans to take over from Israel occupation in the Gaza Strip are of no consequence to Muslim militants. They answer to a higher authority — Islam.

Under a September peace deal, Israel will eventually redeploy in the Gaza Strip and abandon densely populated areas to Mr. Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organisation. But Muslim activists expect little solace from the changing of the guard.

"The main issue is not to give us more food and more money. We need an identity and the PLO cannot provide us with an identity. Islam is the solution," said Moussa Morei, 25.

"The PLO leadership has lost touch with people here. They live in another planet. They have a lavish lifestyle," said Magdi Akeel, a Muslim activist.

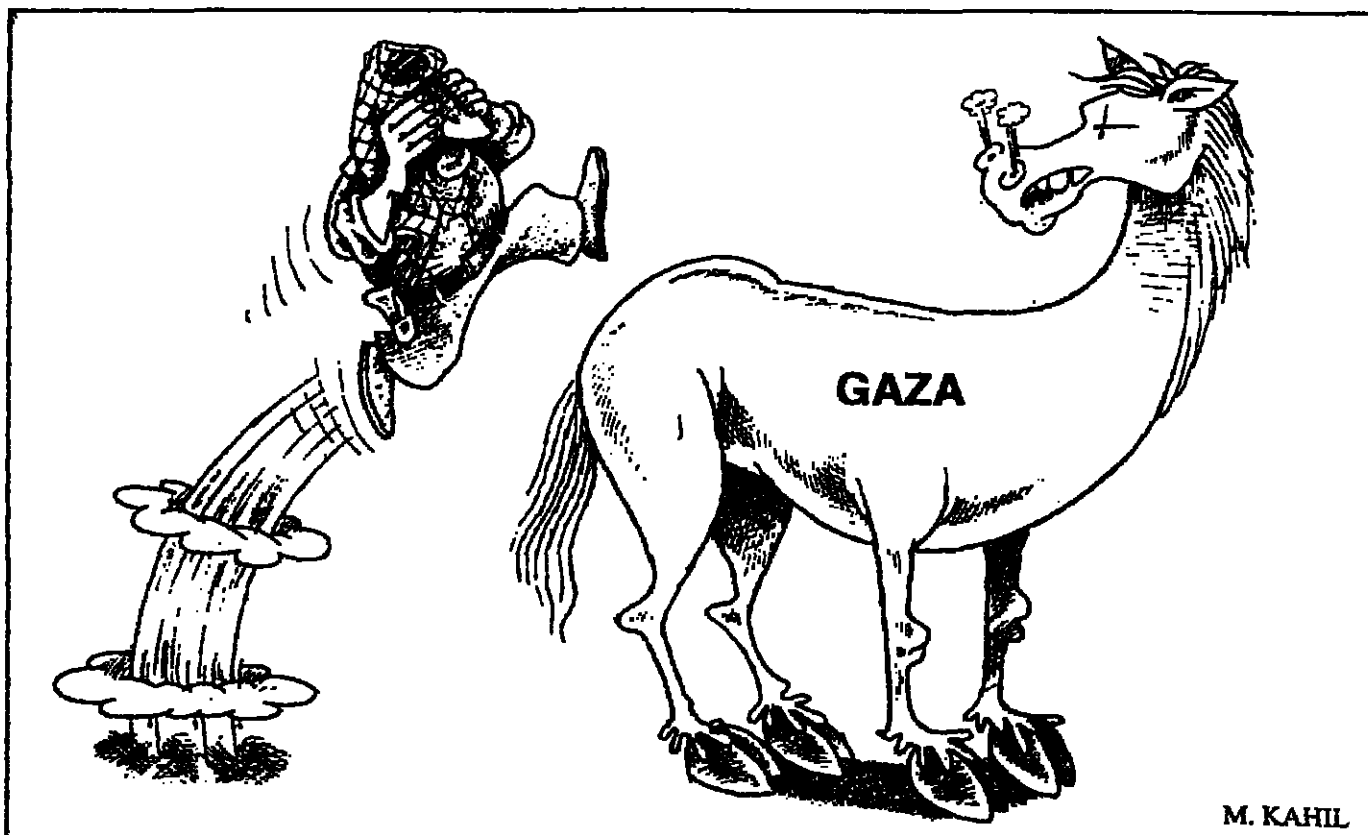
"They drive Mercedes cars. They eat with forks and knives. They forgot the life of poverty that exists here. I worry about the shock of the people from this leadership which is coming here," he said.

Hamas, the PLO's leading rival in an uprising against Israel that erupted six years ago, is the strongest and militarily most active and popular Islamic group in the strip. Only the most religious Muslims, free of crime and corruption, are allowed membership in Hamas.

Hamas opposes the peace deal and is devoted to destroying the Jewish state. It receives funds from abroad, including Iran, according to both Palestinian and Israeli sources.

With the misery, poverty and oppression Islam takes on an added importance in people's lives.

Muslim militant groups have already established a network



M. KAHIL

of social, educational, health, economic and judicial societies to ease life for a people that have suffered through nearly 27 years of occupation.

With an eye to the future, Islamic societies run about 23 kindergartens across Gaza, educating 8,000 children, most of them sons of martyrs or prisoners. Children as young as six are taught to memorise the Koran.

Muslim scholars known as "reconcilers" act as judges in the absence of civil courts. They rule in family feuds, crimes, robberies, divorce, inheritance, adultery and property ownership issues, their rulings are based on Islamic Sharia law.

"In cases of homicide, the killer will pay blood money to the parents of the victim. The

sum should be the equivalent to the price of 100 camels according to the Sharia," said Sheikh Abdul Aziz Al Kujok, a prominent reconciler.

He said the amount is decided by a committee of scholars. In a recent case of murder, the killer had to pay JD 48,000 (nearly \$70,000) to the victim's family.

"With casualties, we count the number of blows and injuries of the victim," Mr. Kujok said. "The amount of money will depend on how serious the blows are. Every stroke has its own price."

In the absence of police authority, militants enforce the decisions of the reconcilers.

"We try to stop violations and lawlessness through persuasion and intimidation, by

making people return to their conscience," Mr. Kujok said. Dotted with ramshackle refugee camps, Gaza is home to the 500,000 Palestinian observance of Islam.

Gaza women wear the Islamic code of dress — a headscarf and long dress. Alcohol is not openly on sale.

Men and women must not be seen together unless related. At the Islamic university, men and women attend separate campuses, and take turns in laboratories.

Mosques and religious contests seem to offer the only entertainment for young people. An advertisement at the university announced a contest in memorising The Koran with a prize of JD 1,000 (about \$1,400).

"The university has a great role in Islamising the society. Its philosophy is to create a Muslim individual who will then make an Islamic society through legitimate means," university official Ahmad Al Sarauti told Reuters.

"When you achieve an Islamic society you will naturally have stronger influence in unions and institutions. Then eventually you can attain power and rule," he added.

By providing social services, Islamic societies win the hearts of many Gazans.

"The Islamists live our suffering and endurance. They go down to the street. They share our agonies and miseries," said Jamil Abdallah, 37, of Jabalya refugee camp.

What to expect in 1994 from a world in turmoil

The Associated Press

NOW THAT the Soviet empire has fallen apart, some of its parts are falling apart. More political turmoil may lie ahead for Russia, too, given the sudden rise of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who speaks of nuking Russia's neighbours and taking Alaska back.

Although the decade big war never came, the belligerents of the world make up for it by starting little ones.

None of the new wars seem to end, but the combatants in some old ones may be getting tired. Steps toward peace are being taken in Northern Ireland, where the latest round of fighting among Protestants and Roman Catholics has stretched over 25 years, and between Israelis and Palestinians, who have been at it twice as long.

Commercially, the world is getting together: Europe keeps moving toward union, however slowly; the United States, Canada and Mexico embarked on a free trade agreement Jan. 1, and the 117 members of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade finally struck a deal after seven years of manoeuvre and haggling.

A year ago, it appeared that the United Nations could become a global peacekeeper and stop at least the worst of the violence. That did not happen, and only a ghost of the hope remains.

The little wars are fought over territory, religion, ethnicity anything that has festered in enough hearts for enough generations.

While the vengeful kill each other, the merciful do their best to heal the wounded, feed the living and comfort the displaced. Thus, as another year begins, the human race continues on its contradictory way.

The Associated Press asked correspondents around the world for their assessments of what 1994 may hold. Here are their reports:

United Nations

Hopes that the United Nations would be the centrepiece of a new world order were dashed in 1993. Its dim prospects for this year include retreats on peacekeeping and a deeper financial crisis.

After great expectations at the end of the cold war, the United Nations has fallen on hard times. While it completed a major mission successfully in Cambodia last year, there were setbacks or failures in Somalia, Bosnia, Haiti and Angola.

The cash shortage got worse and there is little chance of improvement. Charges of waste and mismanagement continue to be levelled at the bureaucracy.

"The United Nations renaissance remains in question," Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali said in his annual report to the General Assembly in September.

U.N. forces often are thrust into conflicts where major powers "are not willing to venture themselves and are reluctant to make the hard choices posed by a new era of challenges to peace," he said.

The great disappointment was Somalia, where 30,000 peacekeepers were engaged in aggressive disarmament of factions and clashes with the forces of warlord Mohammed Farah Aided.

After 18 U.S. soldiers were killed in one battle, the United States announced that it would pull out by March 31, 1994. France, Belgium, Germany and Italy later said they also would withdraw. At year's end, the United Nations was desperately seeking replacements.

After Somalia, the United States was wary of U.N. undertakings. When 150 Haitian thugs fired in the air and chanted slogans, a U.S. ship carrying a small contingent of soldiers and police trainers sailed away from Port-au-Prince harbour without docking.

The U.N. mission to restrain police and soldiers and build public works projects never got off the ground.

In Bosnia, U.N. peacekeepers and relief workers continue to feed the hungry, but have not been able to halt Serb or Croat aggression, U.N. and

NATO forces have not used force to stop the fighting, although it was authorised, and an international peace plan collapsed.

Civil war returned to Angola, where only 74 U.N. peacekeepers remained. A larger U.N. force was unable to disarm combatants.

About 74,000 peacekeepers, police and others were deployed in 15 missions at year's end. Arrears by member states are about \$1.5 billion.

In his first U.N. address, in September, President Clinton said peacekeeping demands have greatly exceeded U.N. resources and called for restraint in undertaking new missions.

"The United Nations simply cannot become engaged in every one of the world's conflicts," he said. "If the American people are to say 'yes' to U.N. peacekeeping, the United Nations must know when to say 'no'."

Asian subcontinent

The Asian subcontinent is enjoying a period of political stability that may let its feuding nations work on their endemic problems of poverty, ethnic conflict and population growth.

India and Pakistan are starting talks on Kashmir, the disputed province with a Muslim majority that has caused two of their three wars since 1947. About 7,500 people have been killed in Kashmir since Muslim guerrillas began a separatist war against Hindu-dominated India four years ago.

The United States would like to see the negotiations expanded to include nuclear non-proliferation.

Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao of India leads a fragile minority government, but gained strength in state elections at the end of the year, stifling much of the dissent against his leadership.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan, who returned to power in October, has the most stable government since democracy was restored in 1988.

To maintain its new stability, the subcontinent — home to the poorest one-fifth of humanity — must begin showing economic progress for the masses.

In Afghanistan, no end is in sight to fighting among rival Islamic factions that has cost more lives in two years than did the 13-year civil war against a Soviet-backed government.

Sri Lanka passed a painful test of its democracy in 1993 when its president was assassinated by a suicide bomber. Although the transition was smooth, the new government seems less willing to talk with leaders of an 11-year rebellion among the Tamil minority.

Democracy seems to have taken root in Nepal and Bangladesh, but both countries are desperately poor.

South Pacific

More than two centuries after the first white men arrived, Australia is coming to grips with its debt to aboriginal citizens.

In 1994, parliament will adopt legislation proposed by Prime Minister Paul Keating that recognises aboriginal land claims, but there may be prolonged legal challenges.

Most of the land is desert outback held by federal and state government. Mr. Keating has promised a fund to buy back privately held land, and a "social justice" reform package of health, education and job-creation programmes for aborigines, most of whom now live in the cities.

With the economy barely emerging from years of recession, the opposition will argue that the country cannot afford the expense.

New Zealand enters 1994 fresh from a November parliamentary election that cut the conservative National Party's majority to a single seat. That will frustrate efforts to reform what has become one of the world's most democratic economies, with cradle-to-grave benefits.

Because New Zealand still holds to its anti-nuclear position, its military relationship with the United States remains

difficult, but full diplomatic relations will be restored in 1994.

Papua New Guinea has battled a secessionist movement in Bougainville for five years. Past attempts at negotiation failed, and a new initiative this year is unlikely.

Prime Minister Sitiveni Pabuka of Fiji wants to revise the constitution to remove restrictions on the political rights of ethnic Indians, who make up nearly half the population.

After Mr. Rabuka led two coups in 1987, a new constitution was adopted that guaranteed rule by indigenous Fijians. Now he seeks to change it.

In December, several cabinet members defected to the opposition, forcing new elections scheduled for February.

Canada

Prime Minister Jean Chretien, elected in October, says he is going to put Quebec separatism on the back burner and turn Canada's attention to the economy.

Over a decade, Ottawa has expended endless energy trying to deal with the aspirations of the huge French-speaking province, to no avail.

With separatist sentiment on the rise, 54 Quebec nationalists providing the main House of Commons opposition and provincial elections approaching, the issue is not going to go away despite Mr. Chretien's wishful thoughts.

French-speakers, about 85 per cent of Quebec's 6.9 million people, have long felt like second-class citizens in a largely English-speaking country. Many fear for their French language and culture.

Quebec has yet to sign the 1982 constitution, and there have been two unsuccessful attempts at amending it to appease the province.

The separatist Bloc Quebecois won 54 of Quebec's 75 seats in the commons in October. If nationalists win the provincial elections in 1994, they promise a referendum on sovereignty within a year.

Mr. Chretien is right, however, when he says he has bigger fish to fry.

Unemployment is still above 11 per cent, the economy is struggling through a long recession and the budget deficit is growing. Social services such as unemployment insurance and the national health programme are on the edge of disaster.

If that is not enough, half a million Indians want self-rule: the Atlantic fishing industry is collapsing; environmentalists worry about chemicals, loggers and wolves; and the western province feel ignored.

Africa

War, poverty and disease will continue bringing misery to millions in Africa, but there is hope in a few trouble spots like South Africa, Angola and Mozambique.

Somalia is a question. U.S. troops, scheduled to withdraw by March 31, are the backbone of the U.N. force meant to end two years of civil war and famine. Despite peace talks that have included warlord Aided, observers fear clan fighting will resume as soon as the foreign troops leave.

South Africa holds its first election with universal suffrage in 1994, and the black majority is likely to make Nelson Mandela president. With its wealth and development, the new South Africa may serve as a sorely needed economic engine for the continent.

In Malawi, one of Africa's last old-style dictatorships seems on the way out, a victim of the democratic movement in Africa that began in 1990.

A cease-fire seems likely in Angola, where civil war has been killing 1,000 people a day by U.N. estimates, and in Mozambique, guerrillas have begun disarming under a U.N. arranged peace plan. But weapons from these warring conflicts are being rapidly smuggled throughout Africa.

Nigeria, the continent's most populous country, enters the year with a new military dictator, Gen. Sani Abacha, who has promised democracy while dismantling such democratic institutions as the National Assembly.

There is new tribal conflict in Burundi, and in Sudan, southerners enter their 11th year of fighting the Muslim-dominated north.

Much of Africa remains rife with tribal tension, poverty and corruption. There are few signs that democracy will make more than limited progress, although governments seem to be giving greater sway to free markets.

AIDS continues to spread, and malaria is a growing threat because of drug-resistant

strains.

The Middle East

Middle East peace negotiations will move forward in 1994. Syria, Lebanon and Jordan probably will join the Palestinians in making peace with Israel.

Transition from war to peace will generate problems that could be most evident in Syria. President Hafez Assad's minority Alawite regime will have to tread a precarious path towards political and economic reforms after decades of repressive rule.

Rejectionists on both sides will continue trying to sabotage the U.S.-sponsored peace process.

Yasser Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, may have to crack down hard on radicals and Muslim fundamentalists who consider the peace accord a betrayal.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin will face problems from Israelis who oppose giving up Arab lands occupied in the 1967 war.

The momentum of the Sept. 13 agreement between the PLO and Israel is unlikely to be stopped, however. The Americans hold Israel's purse strings and the collapse of the Soviet Union deprived hard-line Arab states of their main support.

Mr. Assad was angered by Mr. Arafat's separate deal with Israel and has played hard to get. But he ultimately has little choice but to make peace as his Soviet-supplied arsenal deteriorates and his need for economic aid grows.

Lebanon and Jordan are sure to follow once Mr. Assad agrees, but turmoil will not disappear overnight, particularly on the region's periphery.

Iran continues to rearm and faces growing internal unrest unless it can revive its economy, a task made more difficult by falling oil revenues. Tehran's relations with Washington are likely to get worse as domestic problems increase.

The United Nations might ease sanctions on Iraq if Saddam Hussein behaves, but leaving him in power will keep fear of his regional ambitions alive.

Violence by Islamic extremists will continue in Egypt and Algeria. Their governments and several others in the region will have to start addressing economic and political inequalities they have long ignored.

The Far East

The Far East begins 1994 under the shadow of North Korea's refusal to comply with international nuclear controls.

Diplomatic negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang may decide whether East Asia embarks on a full-scale arms race or joins the global trend towards disarmament.

Despite the new tension on the peninsula, South Korea continues its own rapid transition to a civilian democracy.

China's rapid growth will continue, but its long-term economic health depends on painful reforms the government has promised to introduce. These include cutting subsidies to money-losing factories and remodelling the banking system.

In just three years, China regains control over Hong Kong. The British colony anticipates a bumpy year as Beijing and London argue over how much democracy can be introduced. A showdown could unsettle the economy, which has enjoyed the fruits of China's boom.

Taiwan's transformation from near-dictatorship to multiparty democracy continues as the island pushes for equal international status with China despite Beijing's efforts to isolate it diplomatically.

The new democratically elected government of Cambodia, still battling communist Khmer Rouge rebels, will start rebuilding its economy. Vietnam hopes full diplomatic relations will follow Washington's easing of the U.S. economic embargo.

Japan enters 1994 with its leadership divided over political reforms, economic policy and the government's decision to lift its ban on rice imports.

With the economy stuck in what may be the longest slump since World War II, pressure will build for more aggressive measures to stimulate investment and consumer spending.

Former Soviet Union

Armed with a new constitution, President Boris Yeltsin will try to fend off radical nationalists and keep Russia moving towards free market in 1994. It will not be easy.

He faces major obstacles: A

powerful faction of extreme nationalists in the new parliament, regional demands for more autonomy and public anger over economic hardship, rising crime and loss of the empire.

One of Russia's best-known astrologers, Globa, has predicted a coup attempt in spring. Another claims Mr. Yeltsin will fall seriously ill. Many sober-minded Russians who are not superstitious also worry about such things.

Even without cataclysm, reformers may spend 1994 on the defensive. Their strongest re-doubt is the new constitution, which gives Mr. Yeltsin sweeping power to issue decrees, make foreign policy and run the economy.

Radical nationalists, led by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, will push for policy changes and cabinet seats. But Mr. Yeltsin can resist because the constitution gives him the power to nominate all top officials and to dissolve parliament if it repeatedly rejects his nominees for prime minister.

From Mr. Yeltsin's viewpoint, the charter's main defect is that it does not clearly define regional and federal authority.

Tatarstan, Chechnya, Yakutia and other regions are demanding greater control over taxes, natural resources, and industry. Unless Mr. Yeltsin can make a deal with regional leaders, Russia runs the risk of disintegrating into independent republics, as the Soviet Union did.

Russians have a long history of oppression under czars and commissars, and their patience is great. But the results of the Dec. 12 election that sent ultranationalists to parliament indicate many citizens are upset by failure of free-market reforms to improve their lives.

Mr. Yeltsin's greatest task in 1994, and greatest challenge, is to change that outlook.

Other former Soviet republics also face economic turmoil. Ukraine and Georgia are struggling with severe energy shortages and high unemployment. Armenia and Azerbaijan have been wracked by six years of war over Nagorno-Karabakh, with no end in sight.

If there is a bright spot, it is the small Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, always the most Western-oriented of the Soviet republics. They are moving quickly toward market economies and have established relatively stable currencies. For them, 1994 could be a year of revival.

Eastern Europe

Four years after the demise of communism, the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe are still emerging.

All face another arduous year, stymied by a stagnant world economy, the Yugoslav conflict and popular disenchantment with western-style economics.

Fallout from the Balkan war will continue to threaten economic and political stability. The biggest fear is that the fighting will spread.

There are a few bright spots. Painful reforms are paying off in Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, which will continue doing better than their eastern neighbours. They seem ready for genuine growth if a world recovery starts. The Yugoslav situation does not get worse and Western Europe drops its trade barriers.

Although Hungary has been an island of political stability, trouble may lie ahead. With the death of Prime Minister Jozsef Antall, and his party's popularity plunging, parliament could be splintered by an electoral free-for-all.

The only real hope for economic recovery in the former Yugoslavia lies in Slovenia, the northernmost region, which has turned to its Western European neighbours.

Expect little progress in Bulgaria or Romania, where political infighting and fear of labour unrest have sapped the will for reform. Even if they do get serious about reform, the two countries have lost billions in trade because of U.N. sanctions on neighbouring Serbia.

Slovakia has been in trouble since its divorce a year ago from the richer Czech Republic. Albania could show the fastest rate of growth in the region, but will remain the poorest country in Europe.

Western Europe

For Western Europe, the economy will remain the overriding concern in 1994.

In the dozen nations of the European Community, unemployment is expected to top 11 per cent, meaning 18 million people will be out of work.

Germany's economy, largest in the region, shows signs of shaking off its worst recession since World War II, but unemployment is expected to con-

tinue climbing.

To open up more jobs, EC members are under pressure to reduce costs per worker so hiring will be less expensive for employers. A key target will be the expensive social security network of disability, retirement, health and other benefits that have marked the European welfare state for decades.

Western European nations also seek ways to draw their eastern neighbours closer. The 16-nation North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) will hold a summit in early January — President Clinton's first to decide on requests for membership from Poland, Hungary and other former foes.

NATO probably will approve an American plan called partnership for peace, which would let eastern nations participate in joint military exercises, crisis management and peacekeeping without granting full membership. They would be required to share information about defence budget and provide troops if asked.

EC members will start implementing their new treaty on European Union, which calls for a common foreign policy, joint central bank and single currency by 1999.

On Jan. 1, the 12 nations took a step towards a monetary merger by opening the European Monetary Institute, the forerunner of a central bank. Common foreign and defence policies are expected to lag behind, as illustrated by Western Europe's failure to halt the war in the former Yugoslavia.

Mexico and Central America

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) comes just in time for Mexico's leaders, who hope for an economic boost before the presidential election next year.

In his term as president, Carlos Salinas de Gortari made an economic revolution with free-market reforms capped by NAFTA, the accord with the United States and Canada that took effect Jan. 1.

Political reforms have come more slowly. Mr. Salinas followed tradition by choosing the ruling institutional Revolutionary Party's candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio, who is almost certain to win and extend the Party's 65-year monopoly on national power for six more years.

Polis indicate the party would win a fair election, but opposition leaders believe they

have little chance of finding out. In Yucatan state elections Nov. 28, the governor resigned to protest interference from Mexico City and observers reported clear signs of fraud.

Dramatic reforms are taking place in Central America as it emerges from decades of civil war and dictatorship.

El Salvador will hold its first peacetime election for a civilian president since the 1930s as part of an agreement ending its civil war. Panamanians will vote for the first time since the U.S. invasion that ousted dictator Manuel Noriega in 1989. In November, Honduras achieved a record fourth consecutive presidential vote without a coup or war.

Old hatreds still haunt the area, however. Rightist death squads stalk El Salvador and Guatemala. Nicaragua's civil war ended in 1990. But its politicians have yet to agree on how to share power peacefully.

Guatemala overcame a presidential attempt to seize dictatorial powers in 1992, but U.N. observers say human rights abuses continue.

Caribbean

In 1994, expect more political turmoil in Haiti and a continued economic decline in Cuba.

The outside world appears inclined to resolve the Haitian impasse with or without Jean Bertrand Aristide, the elected president overthrown by the military in 1991.

"Unfortunately, without Aristide it's going to leave the place in the same old mess," said Sociologist Anthony Maingot, who edits Hemisphere magazine for the Latin Caribbean Centre of Florida International University.

"It will mean more confusion and adversity," said Aaron Ramos, director of the Institute of Caribbean at the University of Puerto Rico.

Few are willing to predict the fate of Fidel Castro, who has ruled Cuba for 35 years, even after four years of economic suffering caused by the collapse of his Soviet-bloc sponsors.

Mr. Maingot sees the question as, "what is threshold of pain for that society?" He and others believe the North American Free Trade Agreement will further isolate Mr. Castro from Mexico, which has been his main ally in the hemisphere.

Tourism in the Caribbean should have a banner year, but that will not offset job losses from a troubled regional eco-

nomy. The lack of jobs will force more people to leave in search of work, most of them going to the United States.

Dependence on money they send home is expected to grow, as is the laundering of money from an increasing flow of Colombian cocaine through the Caribbean.

South America

Most of South America's civilian governments will push ahead with free-market reform in 1994.

Venezuela and Chile chose new presidents in December and Brazil, Colombia and Uruguay will do so this year.

Chile, Argentina and Venezuela, whose economic programme are furthest along, probably will seek to join the United States, Canada and Mexico in the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Washington has said those three are the leading candidates.

Peru, Colombia, Paraguay, Ecuador and Bolivia plan to sell state-run companies as part of their reform programmes.

Brazil, the continent's giant, also is its biggest question mark. Congress will vote on a government plan to lower inflation, now more than 35 per cent a month. But with elections due in October, legislators are expected to resist spending cuts and tax increases.

An early favourite for the presidency is labour leader Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, whose belief in state control of some sectors raises doubts about how far economic reform will go in Brazil.

The economic future of Venezuela under the Rafael Caldera, the new president, also is unclear. Mr. Caldera ran a populist campaign and has suggested he might try to change parts of a free-market reform programme began in 1989.

In Colombia, the death of drug lord Pablo Escobar could reduce terrorism, but the growth of the rival Cali cartel ensures that cocaine will continue to flow.

Violence by leftist guerrillas in Peru may decline because of the capture of top leaders and splits within the insurgent ranks.

President Carlos Menem of Argentina is expected to continue his economic reforms, which have produced the region's highest growth rates for two years, and run for a second term in 1995.

JORDAN WELFARE LOTTERY

Special Issue No. 24

Drawing of January 2, 1994

Winning Tickets

Holder of ticket No. 49691 B Wins JD 80,000	Twenty consolation prizes totaling JD 10,000 each wins JD 1,000 49692 49693 49791 49691 59691 49690 49681 49791 49691 59691
Holder of ticket No. 49691 A Wins JD 30,000	Ten consolation prizes totaling JD 5,000 each wins JD 500 49692 49691 49791 49691 59691 49690 49681 49791 49691 59691
Holder of ticket No. 25147 A B Wins JD 15,000	Twenty consolation prizes totaling JD 4,000 each wins JD 200 25148 25157 25247 26147 35147 25146 25137 25047 24147 15147
Holder of ticket No. 39982 A B Wins JD 10,000	Twenty consolation prizes totaling JD 5,000 each wins JD 250 39983 39992 39082 39982 49982 39981 39972 39882 39882 29982
Holder of ticket No. 29328 A B Wins JD 9,000	Twenty consolation prizes totaling JD 4,000 each wins JD 200 29329 29338 29428 29328 39328 29327 29318 29228 28328 19328
Holder of ticket No. 61430 A B Wins JD 6,000	Twenty consolation prizes totaling JD 1,000 each wins JD 150 61431 61440 61530 62430 71430 61439 61420 61330 60430 51430
Holder of ticket No. 46893 A B Wins JD 5,000	Twenty consolation prizes totaling JD 2,000 each wins JD 120 46894 46893 46993 47893 56893 46892 46883 46793 45893 36893
Holder of ticket No. 18138 A B Wins JD 3,000	Twenty consolation prizes totaling JD 1,000 each wins JD 80 18139 18148 18238 19138 28138 18137 18128 18038 17138 08138
Holder of ticket No. 50274 A B Wins JD 2,000	Twenty consolation prizes totaling JD 1,000 each wins JD 70 50275 50284 50374 51274 60274 50273 50264 50174 49274 30274

Ticket numbers	50622 57963 A B	Win JD 1,000 each
Ticket numbers	79582 39138 A B	Win JD 500 each

Pakistan's Bhutto curbs central bank autonomy

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, in one of her first pieces of legislation since taking office in October, has curbed a ground-breaking, three-month-old bill that gave unprecedented independence to the central bank.

"This begs the question of autonomy," Deputy Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan Ashraf Janjua told Reuters by telephone Sunday. "The ministry of finance and the government will again have the upper hand."

President Farooq Leghari Friday passed an ordinance sent to him by the cabinet, signing away the central bank's power to refuse overdrafts to the government and to set monetary policy.

The new ordinance withdraws the central bank's powers to fix government limits on borrowing, hobbles its ability to act independently of the government, reduces the term of office of the governor and returns to the government the privilege to nominate directors.

"This makes fiscal policy vulnerable," Mr. Janjua said. The ordinance was passed in October under caretaker Prime Minister Moeen Qureshi, a former World Bank vice-president. He said his main aim was to restrict the access of the federal and provincial governments to borrow and cut the budget deficit.

"There was excessive borrowing by the federal government," he said. "The ordinance returns the

ment, lack of control and I felt that where I was prepared to establish financial controls and stick by them, a political government may not be prepared to do that and may force the state bank to finance those credits," Mr. Qureshi said in a New York interview published in Sunday's local Dawn newspaper.

The new ordinance requires the bank to consult the government, robbing it of the power to overrule the government that was enshrined in Mr. Qureshi's ordinance.

"We are now two unequals," Mr. Janjua said. "For three months we had talked to them (the government) as equals."

Latest figures show the government is close to a 1993-94 (July-June) budget deficit target of 5.4 per cent of gross domestic product set by the International Monetary Fund. The government is only about 2.0 billion rupees (\$66 million) off its first six-month target of 46 billion rupees (\$1.5 billion), Mr. Janjua said.

The deficit soared to 7.5 per cent in 1992-93, exceeding targets by 1.5 per cent as the government borrowed heavily to make up for profligate spending and flagging tax revenues.

"This is a tragedy," economist Hafeez Pashia, commerce minister in Mr. Qureshi's cabinet, said of the ordinance. "The desire is still there to retain control and that's the problem."

The ordinance returns the

term of the governor from five to three years and empowers the government to appoint a new head of the bank within 180 days from the signing of the ordinance.

State Bank governor Mohammad Yaqub, whose outspokenness on fiscal and monetary problems has won widespread publicity in his three months in office, declined to comment.

Mr. Pashia said the longer term of office and wider powers granted to the governor under Mr. Qureshi's ordinance were probably the strongest section of the legislation.

Mr. Yaqub said last month in an interview she did not regard the new-found autonomy of the bank as a signal for confrontation with the government.

"The bank is still the most autonomous in South Asia," Finance Secretary Qazi Ali-mullah told a local newspaper. The bank had already begun to assert itself, for the first time in many years, by presenting by several of the four provincial governments.

The ordinance had restored to the bank the power to change reserve requirements and to set liquidity ratios that were removed during nationalisation policies in the 1970s.

It had been able to set limits on state borrowing and to coordinate with the government when monetary policy could be approved by the board without reference to the government.

German Bundesbank hints at new interest rate cuts

BONN (R) — The Bundesbank, citing progress in controlling the growth of money supply and its fight against inflation, has hinted that it may have room to consider new cuts in its leading interest rates.

Bundesbank President Hans Tietmeyer told the Welt Am Sonntag newspaper that inflation could fall below three per cent in 1994.

Inflation in the former West Germany rose 0.1 per cent in December to stand at 3.6 per cent above year-earlier levels, according to earlier government data.

"We expect to achieve a better result in 1994," Mr. Tietmeyer said. "We do not rule out that in the course of the year we will also have a two in front of the decimal point."

"Our policy also includes the possibility of further interest rate cuts in the event that the expansion of money supply weakens," he added.

The Bundesbank narrowed its target range for M3 money supply growth in 1994 to four to six per cent, despite exceeding the target for the past two years. Money supply growth is a leading indicator that measures future inflationary trends.

"We expect it to level out during the course of the year. We will then see which interest

rate level is appropriate," Mr. Tietmeyer said.

Under pressure to show progress on the economy ahead of this year's 19 local, state, national and European Parliament elections, politicians renewed efforts to persuade the central bank to move faster to lower rates.

Friedhelm Ost, economic expert from Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats (CDU), said that in the face of soaring unemployment the Bundesbank should underpin budding economic growth by lowering key rates.

"The inflation rate will fall. The Bundesbank's manoeuvring room in monetary policy is increasing so that the leading interest rates could be significantly lowered again," he said.

The Bundesbank's discount rate, its short-term lending rate, is currently 5.75 per cent, and the Lombard emergency lending rate is 6.75 per cent.

Mr. Tietmeyer, who took the helm of the central bank in October, said the Bundesbank had significantly lowered rates step-by-step last year, setting the stage for a recovery.

"The decision is no longer primarily one of monetary policy, but rather it rests with the companies themselves, in wage contracts and labour costs, as well as in the realm of public finance," he said.

"We must achieve the consolidation of public finances, including the social security system, by limiting spending," he added.

The Bundesbank's concerns about the state of public finances were echoed by Mr. Kohl's junior coalition member Free Democrats (FDP), who see an enormous gap in the 1994 budget.

"I would not want to use the word chaos, but financial policy is not very convincing at the moment," FDP economic spokesman Otto Lambsdorff told German television.

The OECD has said that the German economy was still suffering from recession but should recover gradually from the second half of 1994.

"The main recessionary forces of the last two years — rising labour costs, weak export markets and high interest and exchange rates — continue to exert a restraining influence on the economy," the Paris-based economic forum said in a report.

The economy is also having to adapt to a sharp tightening of fiscal policy.

"Nevertheless, the current moderation of wage and price pressures and the ongoing easing of monetary conditions are producing the basis for a gradual pick-up of growth from the second half of 1994 on," it

added. It predicted overall expansion in gross domestic product (GDP) of 0.8 per cent, with growth of 0.4 per cent in west Germany and 0.5 per cent in the smaller east German economy.

The economic upturn would be accompanied by lower inflation due to slowing wage growth, although higher taxes and public charges would exert upward pressure on prices in the near term. Inflation would slow to the central bank's two per cent target by 1995.

Consumption is likely to decline sharply for another year or so due to unemployment and declining real income. But this would improve once employment began to recover in mid-1994.

"From mid-1994 onwards, overall inflation should start to decline rapidly and employment to recover, thereby allowing real incomes and consumption to increase," it said.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) predicted more cuts in German interest rates, which it said would lay the basis for a further easing throughout Europe. German short-term rates were seen falling below four per cent by the end of 1994.

It said the overshooting of a 6.5 per cent target ceiling for

M3 money supply growth last year was largely due to heavy public sector borrowing and high yields for the short-term investments which are included in M3.

Exports are expected to grow only half as fast as markets this year due to the lagged impact of past competitive losses.

Recovery would not gain momentum until 1995, when these depressing influences on exports should wane. It predicted overall German economic growth that year of two to 2.5 per cent.

"The main factor in stabilising competitiveness will be continuing significant wage moderation, while profits should also be enhanced by the cumulative effects of labour shedding."

Government moves for fiscal consolidation should have a positive effect in the long term by reducing policy uncertainty and increasing investor confidence.

The main risk to the forecast lay in the level of private consumption, which the OECD said might not recover as quickly as expected due to continued uncertainty on the labour market.

Further appreciation of the mark might also cause a slower upturn in exports and investment than predicted.

OECD expects weak Japan economic growth

TOKYO (R) — A rise in the yen shook the weak Japanese economy in 1993 and recovery prospects are poor as the currency's strength hits exports and consumption, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has said.

"Any recovery in economic activity is expected to be slow, with 1994 likely to register, at best, very weak growth," the Paris-based think-tank said in its twice-yearly outlook.

The OECD said growth in gross domestic product (GDP) — the size of the economy — could be well under one per cent in 1994 and expansion of two per cent was unlikely until 1995.

Corporate profits have fallen and the uncertain employment outlook may continue to weaken consumer spending in 1994, the economic forum for 24 top industrialised nations said.

"With exports and investment likely to remain depressed, and the stock-adjustment process yet to be completed, the forces acting in favour of

recovery are rather weak," it said.

Japan's current account balance of payments surplus should narrow slowly to around three per cent of GDP in 1994 and 1995, compared with three to four per cent now.

The OECD said it would be particularly difficult for Japan to break out of the current deflationary trend if firms start laying off workers. Companies are trying to hold on to workers through salary cuts and the relocation of employees, with help from government subsidies.

Steps towards deregulating markets and an enhanced role for the banking sector in providing financial help and more credit may help bring the recession to an end.

These moves could be reinforced when parliament passes a package of tax reforms.

Deregulation is likely to improve market access for foreign goods but is not expected to make to have an immediate impact on Japan's economic growth or trade, the OECD said.

Oman expects \$782 m deficit in '94

MUSCAT (AFP) — Oman expects a deficit of 301 million riyals (about \$782 million) in 1994 or 17.4 per cent of its revenues, the official Omani News Agency reported here Sunday.

In the 1994 budget revenues are projected at 1.73 billion riyals (\$449 billion) against 1.71 billion riyals (\$445 billion) in 1993, the agency said, quoting official figures.

Oil revenues were estimated at 1.31 billion riyals (\$3.4 billion) or 76 per cent of total receipts.

Expenditures for 1994 were expected to reach 2.03 billion riyals (\$528 billion), against 2.26 billion riyals (about \$5.87 billion) last year, with defence and security outlays accounting for 30 per cent.

The 1993 budget had projected a \$1.14 billion deficit against \$790 million in 1992, with last year's higher figure linked to lower oil revenues.

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwaiti investment firms reared in the cosy world of state fund management plan an ambitious move into a personal investment market dominated by foreigners.

The firms will have to work hard to unlock even a part of the multibillion dollar treasure chest individual Kuwaitis have stockpiled over the years with foreign investment companies.

The ratio of Kuwaiti private funds placed with foreign against Kuwaiti firms is put by one Kuwaiti company at 100-1.

The Kuwaiti companies say their track record so far in managing private investors' money is as good as anyone's and they have an advantage in being on the doorstep of their customers. Many of whom are very wealthy by any standards.

About 25 commercial banks, state investment firms, insurance and property firms last month held their first exhibition of financial products for individual Kuwaiti investors.

The firms were promoting products including deposit accounts, currencies, gold, bonds, commodities, shares, mutual funds, property portfolios, insurance and time share plans.

"It's probably too early to talk about an active personal investment scene," one banker said.

"But there is a sense of frustration and impatience with the emphasis on foreign

management, because the Kuwaitis really do have the expertise and the necessary technical support to do it themselves."

The companies say they want to boost public awareness of a growing range of Kuwaiti investment products being created to fulfil opportunities flowing from a gradual liberalisation of the banking system and a modest revival in the stock exchange.

Both developments have spurred by progress towards settlement of an 11-year-old bad debt problem stemming from the 1982 collapse of an informal bourse and longstanding commercial losses worsened by Iraq's 1990-91 occupation.

Bankers say money is starting to trickle back into the country as Kuwaitis seeking generous terms for early repayment liquidate overseas assets to enter a settlement programme.

Part of the firms' challenge is to compete with foreign specialists and fly in periodically from banking centres such as Bahrain or from Europe to visit Kuwaiti individuals whose total holding at home and overseas run to billions of dollars.

No-one expects Kuwait's wealthy to shift large amounts to Kuwaiti managers right away, but Kuwaiti firms hope to attract funds from the less well-off plus some from the rightest Kuwaitis that could

grow as a proportion of their holdings over time.

One Kuwaiti firm sets a \$10 million minimum requirement for Kuwaiti investors seeking individual management.

Youssef Al Hassawi, general manager of state-owned Kuwait Foreign Trading Contracting and Investment Company (KFTCIC) said firms could easily double their private Kuwaiti funds under management if only they made a concerted effort.

"The first advantage we have is performance compared to foreigners. Plus, we are very close to our clients here they can come and see us anytime, physically we have an advantage," he said. "If companies can provide the right product I think we'll see some Kuwaitis bringing their funds to local companies."

The competitive personal investment marketplace is far removed from the sheltered realm of Kuwaiti public finance, where state-owned or supported investment offices worked closely with the government to manage its huge oil surpluses.

Three large companies which played that role, KFTCIC, Kuwait Investment Company and Kuwait International Investment Company, performed indifferently in the 1980s, partly due to the 1982 crash of an informal bourse built on post-dated cheques. Much-publicised allegations of corruption in the manage-

ment of state reserves by other state investment companies do not help the image of the Kuwaiti institutions pursuing personal funds.

Maha Al Ghuneim, senior vice president of portfolio management at KFTCIC, said some Kuwaitis shied away from Kuwaiti firms because of their 1980s performance and

did not bother to inform themselves about the competitive returns now available.

"Most our investors have money with us as well as with international houses and if you don't perform they are not going to keep their money. Yet the amounts under management have been growing every year," she said.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY JANUARY 2, 1994

By Thomas S. Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Consider new interest that appeal to you. Take time to really study them from all angles so that when you put them into action your plan will be well-rounded and leave you an escape window.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You are highly inspired now how to attain your greatest aspirations with relative ease. Follow through. Meet key people at interesting places and be your most charming self.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Take over with kin how to have greater security, happiness. Help them to help themselves. Be more progressive, get rid of whatever is old-fashioned and be a unicorn.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Get in touch with associates in every sphere of your existence and plan for the future. Be more successful at any project.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Much can be accomplished now, so be sure to work diligently and also in cooperation with fellow associates. Exchange good ideas.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This can be a wonderfully happy day for you. Commercialise on your social talents, see the right people. Then be off for the good times that you most appreciate.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Be most devoted and loyal in close ties now and do

what they desire of you, so that you impress upon them that they come first with you.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Your finest benefits come from progressive, and dynamic friends today, so be sure to approach them for ideas and cooperation in any project.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Tend strictly to money-making projects today and be particularly cooperative with associates who are practical. Also, impress higher-ups with your fine business acumen.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) An ideal day to look into new system and outlets. Make fine contacts that will mean greater prosperity in the early future for your success.

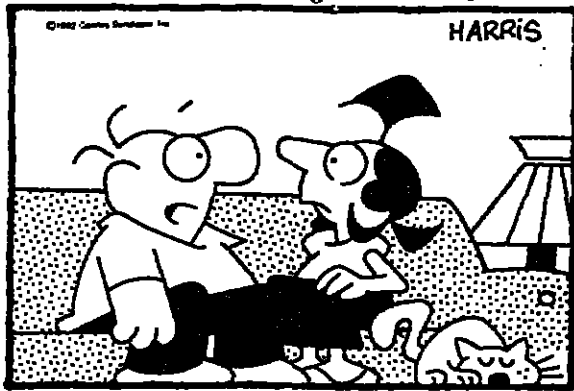
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 31) A particularly fine day for investigations that will give you the data you need at this time, but be selective, think big. Get out to cultural pursuits in the evening.

AQUARIUS: (January 31 to February 19) Get into friendly circles and those who are truly loyal now so that you get good advice and ideas how to get along better with partners, be more successful.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) If you get business affairs in order and get credit rating higher, a bigwig will then give you the backing you need at this time, one who wields a good deal of influence in your life.

THE BETTER HALF.

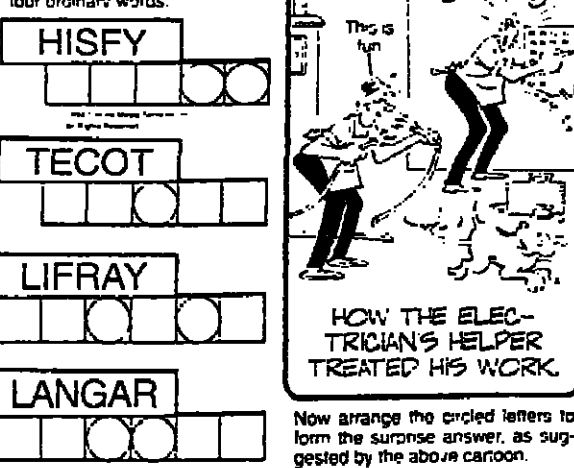
By Harris



"I said honesty and truth are the most important things in a marriage... but I was lying."

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

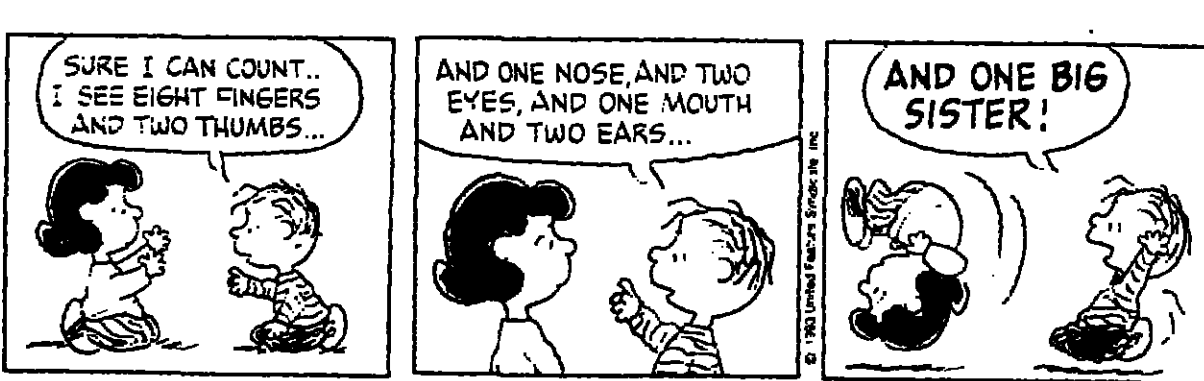
Print answer here: "_____"

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ARRAY RABBI BANDIT LEMBER

Answer: Another name for this ornithologist — A BIRD BRAIN

Peanuts



Andy Capp

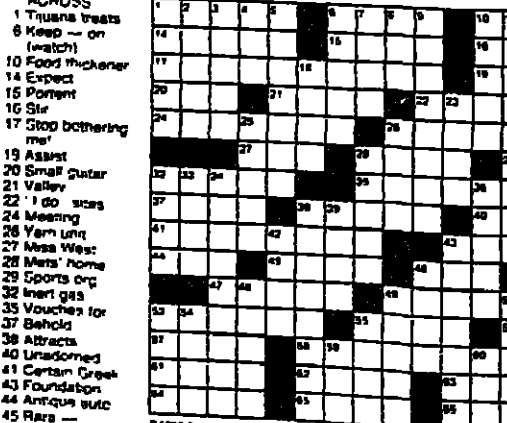


Mutt'n'Jeff



THE Daily Crossword

by Harvey L. Chew



Across: 1. Tuna's treats, 8. Keep on, 10. Food machine, 11. French, 12. Play, 13. Sea, 14. Sea, 15. Sea, 16. Sea, 17. Sea, 18. Sea, 19. Sea, 20. Sea, 21. Sea, 22. Sea, 23. Sea, 24. Sea, 25. Sea, 26. Sea, 27. Sea, 28. Sea, 29. Sea, 30. Sea, 31. Sea, 32. Sea, 33. Sea, 34. Sea, 35. Sea, 36. Sea, 37. Sea, 38. Sea, 39. Sea, 40. Sea, 41. Sea, 42. Sea, 43. Sea, 44. Sea, 45. Sea, 46. Sea, 47. Sea, 48. Sea, 49. Sea, 50. Sea, 51. Sea, 52. Sea.

Down: 1. Sea, 2. Sea, 3. Sea, 4. Sea, 5. Sea, 6. Sea, 7. Sea, 8. Sea, 9. Sea, 10. Sea, 11. Sea, 12. Sea, 13. Sea, 14. Sea, 15. Sea, 16. Sea, 17. Sea, 18. Sea, 19. Sea, 20. Sea, 21. Sea, 22. Sea, 23. Sea, 24. Sea, 25. Sea, 26. Sea, 27. Sea, 28. Sea, 29. Sea, 30. Sea, 31. Sea, 32. Sea, 33. Sea, 34. Sea, 35. Sea, 36. Sea, 37. Sea, 38. Sea, 39. Sea, 40. Sea, 41. Sea, 42. Sea, 43. Sea, 44. Sea, 45. Sea, 46. Sea, 47. Sea, 48. Sea, 49. Sea, 50. Sea, 51. Sea, 52. Sea.

Yesterday's Puzzle Solvers:

1. Sea	2. Sea	3. Sea	4. Sea	5. Sea	6. Sea	7. Sea	8. Sea	9. Sea	10. Sea	11. Sea	12. Sea	13. Sea	14. Sea	15. Sea	16. Sea	17. Sea	18. Sea	19. Sea	20. Sea	21. Sea	22. Sea	23. Sea	24. Sea	25. Sea	26. Sea	27. Sea	28. Sea	29. Sea	30. Sea	31. Sea	32. Sea	33. Sea	34. Sea	35. Sea	36. Sea	37. Sea	38. Sea	39. Sea	40. Sea	41. Sea	42. Sea	43. Sea	44. Sea	45. Sea	46. Sea	47. Sea	48. Sea	49. Sea	50. Sea	51. Sea	52. Sea
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Expenditure cut by 20%; determination seen to defend rial

But analysts — calculating the cost of production, oil set aside for barter trade, subsidies given to local consumption and adding in sales of condensates — say it appeared to be based on a price for Arab Light crude of somewhere around \$14-\$16/barrel.

Arab Light ended 1993 at \$10.70 per barrel, and for prices to rise by more than \$3 on average during the year would imply Brent crude averaging more than \$16, well above the \$13-\$15 range with which traders have begun to feel comfortable.

"It's going to be hard to meet this budget with high subsidies, high population growth and low oil prices," an analyst said.

The king admitted that the world economic situation and the excess of oil supplies to the

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

<p>LARA SALON AND BEAUTY CENTRE</p> <p>Hairstyling, hair removal with hot wax and Arabic way. Manicure, pedicure and facials.</p> <p>Sweiffieh, opposite Boston Fried Chicken.</p>	<p>AVIS</p> <p>We try harder.</p> <p>SAS</p> <p>☎ 699-420</p>	<p>STUDIO HAIG</p> <p>Professional Quality in 1 Hour Service Develop your colour film at our shop and get:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JUMBO photo size 30% larger • Free enlarge- ment 20 x 30 cm <p>Shmeisani - Opp. Grindlays Bank. Phone: 604042 Sweiffieh tel: 823891</p>	<p>The First Class Hotel in Amman that has a Kitchenette in every room...! "Satellite T.V. Reception"</p> <p>DAROTEL داروتيل</p> <p>Amman - Tel. 668193 P.O.Box 9403 - Fax 602434 Telex 23888 DAROTL JO</p> <p>Ideal Residence For Expatriates and Businessmen</p>	<p>Happy Hour At The TILLY</p> <p>From 6 to 8 pm. One drink free for each drink</p> <p>please call for reservations Tel 68967112 - 666149 Shmeisani - Next to Sight & Sound</p>
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New year brings fears of more violence in Sarajevo

SARAJEVO (R) — A grim new year has brought fresh bouts of shelling of besieged Sarajevo, a threat of a new offensive in central Bosnia and superstitious fears that 1994 will not end the violence.

Bosnian government leaders predicted their forces would soon make a push to capture central Bosnia's strategic Lasva Valley if Croats there could not be persuaded to leave without a fight.

Sarajevo's first baby of the new year was a boy and according to local superstition this means the city will face another year of war in 1994. Hospital authorities said 30-year-old Zvezdana Džafković, the wife of a police officer, gave birth to a boy of four kg (nine pounds) on the evening of Jan. 1.

The gloomy superstition attached to the birth of a boy as the new year's first baby stems from Sarajevo's unsettled history over the past century. In 1914, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in the city led to World War I.

Over the new year weekend, the city was hit by shells that wrecked homes and damaged a United Nations peacekeepers' headquarters.

At least five people died and more than 40 were wounded Friday and Saturday as Serb gunners kept up their 21-month siege of the city.

A 70-year-old woman was buried in rubble after two shells landed in quick succession in a residential neighbourhood. When rescuers moved her, amidst choking dust, skin flapped from a head wound to reveal bare skull.

As dust settled, neighbours searched frantically for the wounded.

"May the Serbs and their children suffer the same hell," said Karmen Bozic, a resident of the building where the injured woman was found.

"I go to church every day to pray for everybody in the city. I think that's the only thing that saved me."

U.N. sources said new year celebrations by peacekeepers were interrupted Saturday shortly after midnight when an artillery round hit their building on a wind-blown road known as sniper alley because it is exposed to gunfire.

Part of the building was destroyed but no one was injured. Former French President

Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, on a visit to Sarajevo, said he had suggested several options to hasten a peace settlement in a meeting with Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic.

"I have given him some proposals, which Mr. Izetbegovic said he would consider, which would lead to a quicker peace."

Mr. Giscard d'Estaing, who heads the French parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, refused to elaborate.

In the ski resort of Pale, near Sarajevo, the Bosnian Serbs' self-styled parliament postponed debate on the latest peace talks until Jan. 10, a few days before the warring parties are due to reconvene in Geneva.

Parliamentary speaker Momcilo Krajcinovic, quoted by the Serbian Radio Pristina, said there would be no more concessions to the Muslims, who rejected the latest Bosnia carve-up plan.

"I hope that...an agreement will be reached, but if the fundamentalist and militant forces in the Muslim camp do not allow this, nothing remains for us than to defend our land."

The Yugoslav State News Agency, Tanjug, quoted Bosnian Serb army sources as saying Muslim forces attacked their positions in the Ozren area south of the northern town of Doboj overnight.

Bosnian Vice President Ejup Ganic made clear that his forces were not ready to stop fighting yet and said the Muslims meant to wrest control of the rich Lasva River Valley from rebel Croats in 1994, by force of arms or negotiation.

The Lasva Valley runs west from Novi Travnik through Vitez to Busovaca in central Bosnia. Muslim forces have surrounded about 65,000 Croats in the area for more than six months.

The Bosnian government wants the valley to secure its hold on central Bosnia and to provide living space for hundreds of thousands of Muslims refugees driven from their homes by Serb and Croat forces.

Muslim forces also want to capture a huge explosives factory in Vitez, to be used as part of a home-grown munitions industry to circumvent an international arms embargo.



A Sarajevo man carries a wood burning stove to his house through a snow-covered old Muslim cemetery in the outskirts of Sarajevo (AFP photo)

Anglo-Irish peace plan seen in crisis

DUBLIN (R) — An Anglo-Irish plan to bring peace to Northern Ireland appeared close to collapse Sunday after a carefully planned surge in guerrilla violence by the IRA and headline statements from its political arm, Sinn Féin.

Republican sources said attacks on both the political and military fronts appeared to herald a formal rejection of the initiative in coming weeks unless the British and Irish governments backed down and made major concessions.

Martin McGuinness, a top Sinn Féin official, said in remarks published Sunday that the plan was flawed because it failed publicly to commit Britain withdrawing from the province it partitioned from Ireland seven decades ago.

"Our position remains what it has been in the past, the British should be out of here in the lifetime of a parliament, within five years," Mr. McGuinness told the Dublin Sunday Business Post.

He said it would take three weeks before Sinn Féin gave its formal response to the Dec. 15 Anglo-Irish plan and repeated demands for direct talks on it, which both Britain and Ireland have repeatedly ruled out.

Mr. McGuinness was careful not to explicitly dismiss the initiative by Prime Ministers John Major of Britain and Albert Reynolds of Ireland but his language was the most dismissive Sinn Féin has used since Dec. 15.

"What answer do I give to an IRA man or woman who asks me — does this declaration signal the end to British rule in Ireland?" Mr. McGuinness asked.

His remarks, coupled with a weekend firebomb blitz by the IRA — the Irish Republican Army — in Belfast and the killing of a British soldier in a sniper attack last Thursday marked a clear Republican hardening.

Republican sources said IRA guerrillas fighting to drive Britain from the province have decided to step up attacks to inflame British public opinion and provoke withdrawal from Northern Ireland.

"We're going to see more of these attacks. The idea is to get the British to throw up their hands and say let's get out of Northern Ireland for good," Mr. McGuinness said.

The sources said a renewed bombing assault on targets in mainland Britain could not be ruled out as part of the strategy to put domestic pressure on John Major.

The firebomb blitz, which caused millions of pounds of damage to shops, was part of the same strategy because British taxpayers would foot the bill for compensation.

Mr. Major and Mr. Reynolds said in the Downing Street Declaration, named after Mr. Major's official London residence, that Sinn Féin could join political talks once the IRA laid down its arms.

The British prime minister told parliament hours after the declaration was unveiled that it was no threat to the United Kingdom because it did not meet Sinn Féin demands for a commitment to unification or even joint Anglo-Irish rule of Northern Ireland.

"If...the British government are saying our private position is the same as our public position, that articulated in the House of Commons after the declaration was made, then I'm afraid the prospects of the declaration as far as Republicans are concerned, to say the least, are worthless," Mr. McGuinness said.

The declaration said Irish people from north and south should have a say in the future of their island but gave the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland a veto over any moves towards unification with Ireland.

Mr. McGuinness said Britain should pressure Protestant unionist politicians who want to maintain 300-year-old links with Britain to end their opposition to reunifying Ireland.

"That is the key to unlocking the door," he said.

"The British have to become the persuaders. They have to become wholeheartedly involved in a campaign to persuade the unionists that their best interests lie in the context of a totally changed situation from what they have known in the past."

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Mexico 'worried' after talks fail to halt uprising

TUXTLA GUTIERREZ, Mexico (AFP) — Mexico's southern Chiapas state government said Sunday dialogue had failed to quell a revolt by Indians who seized control of five towns Saturday, killing at least six policemen.

In an official communique the government said it considered the situation "worrying."

It said the Indians — from a previously unknown group calling itself the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) — had been infiltrated by "individuals with obvious paramilitary capacities."

At the outset it had described them only as Indian peasants.

The group "has a powerful arsenal of weapons" and its members are wearing a uniform of "green pants and coffee-coloured shirts with red and black insignia" and "calling themselves liberation forces," the communique added.

According to the local government, residents of the "occupied" towns — San Cristobal de Las Casas, Ocosingo, Altamirano, Las Margaritas and Chamela — denounced the fact that "several Catholic priests and their deacons, supporters of Liberation theology, have joined the rebels and are assisting them with the San Cristobal Diocese's radio system."

The estimated 200-300 EZLN rebels — who took name from Emiliano Zapata, an Indian leader and hero of the 1910 Mexican Revolution — were also in contact with "the Revolutionary Peasant Workers-People's Union Party and the Poor People's Party," the local government said.

Federal Deputy Interior Minister Ricardo Garcia called on peasants in the state to remain calm and to settle their problems by legal means, the Mexican News Agency, Notimex, reported.

Interior Minister Patrocinio Gonzalez declared during an inspection visit to the state that San Cristobal, a city of 80,000 inhabitants, was under siege following an EZLN-imposed curfew there. Mexican television and radio reported.

Although Sunday's official government communique announced that at least six policemen had been killed and an unspecified number of people injured in the revolt, Mexican Radio reported at least 10 deaths and Notimex spoke of 11 injured policemen.

Three Chiapas state bishops — Monsignor Samuel Ruiz of San Cristobal de Las Casas, Monsignor Felipe Aguirre of Tapachula and Monsignor Felipe Arizmendi of Tuxtla Gutierrez — have offered to mediate between the Mexican government and the EZLN.

Bishop Ruiz said the offer was made to avoid a bloodbath, but the government had not yet decided whether to negotiate or to intervene militarily.

The rebels had already shown "goodwill" by allowing the evacuation of 120 foreign tourists from San Cristobal, the bishop said, who is known for his actions in favour of human rights, particularly for Indians.

The rebel Indians distributed a "declaration of war" against the government and the army Saturday, in which they said: "We are aware that the war we are declaring is an extreme measure, but it is justified."

The EZLN called on all Indian tribes in Chiapas state to rally to the uprising to condemn "the dictators who have been leading a war of genocide" against native peoples "for many years."

"We will not halt our combat until the fundamental needs of our people are satisfied," the EZLN declaration said.

The revolt is the first of its kind in Mexico for 20 years.

French law on nationality comes into force

PARIS (AFP) — With the New Year, reforms to France's law on nationality came into force, ending the automatic granting of French nationality to children born in France of foreign parents.

Under the new legislation, such children will now have to apply for French citizenship between the age of 16 and 21. The change in the law was voted by a majority of parliament last July and is part of a package of measures aimed at strictly controlling immigration. These included a restriction to the right of asylum, which required a change in the constitution. From now on France is not obliged to examine requests for asylum if they have already been considered and refused by another member nation of the European Community (EC) signatory to the Schengen accords on abolishing frontier controls.

French minister slams Zhirinovsky

PARIS (R) — European Affairs Minister Alain Lamassouire Sunday warned that France would not tolerate the sort of provocative statements made by Russian ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky against European nations. Interviewed on France 2 Television, Mr. Lamassouire stopped short of saying France would refuse an entry visa to Mr. Zhirinovsky, who has said he plans to visit the country next month. "We cannot tolerate the type of statements made by Monsieur Zhirinovsky," the minister said. "If he continues to issue such statements I cannot see how we could welcome him in France."

Aristide urges 'resistance' to military

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide said in a radio address to his homeland, "We are on the road of resistance, mobilisation and resistance everywhere," Mr. Aristide said Saturday. "The year has to change gears so that the car of democracy will run more swiftly home."

Mr. Aristide, Haiti's first democratically elected leader, gave the speech to mark Haiti's 100th anniversary of independence from France.

5 Chinese found murdered in Spain

VALENCIA, Spain (R) — Five people found slaughtered in Chinese restaurant in the Spanish resort town of Gandia may have been the victims of a Chinese gang, police said Sunday. The woman owner of the restaurant had had her throat slashed, while four waiters had probably been killed with an axe, police said. Police said they believe the five may have been targeted in revenge killings by a Chinese gang involved in smuggling illegal immigrants into Spain.

Top Moscow mobster gunned down

MOSCOW (R) — A "mafia" mobster who terrorised Moscow businessmen was assassinated early Friday, apparently by rival gangsters, ITAR-TASS news agency said. The 41-year-old man, known only as Froi, was brought to hospital in Kupavna east of Moscow overnight, riddled with bullets, and died some hours later. TASS said he was the head of the Russian Balashkikh gang which had clashed frequently with a rival "mafia" from the Caucasus Mountains, the Chechens. It said details were not yet known, but according to preliminary information from the Police Criminal Investigation Department, the Chechens were probably responsible. Two people had been killed in recent clashes between the gangs. "In the opinion of the investigators, this murder could lead to a lot more bloody 'settling of accounts'," TASS said.

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S. Africa killings cloud start of 1994

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Gunmen, ignoring appeals for tolerance and national reconciliation, killed at least eight blacks in South Africa in scattered attacks on the first day of 1994, police said Sunday.

Five men and a woman were killed in attacks Saturday in Johannesburg's satellite townships of Tokoza and Katlehong. Police spokeswoman Lieutenant Janine Smith said most had been shot but one man had been strangled and burned.

Gunmen in the eastern port of Durban shot dead three blacks and wounded two in an attack on a squatter camp Saturday. In another Durban incident, a 22-year-old man was injured in an explosion in a minibus taxi.

The killings blighted the start of the year that will usher in multi-racial democracy and end 350 years of white domination.

Political analysts say the first few months of 1994 could be even more violent than 1993 because of the uncertainty before the first all-race elections on April 27.

President F. W. de Klerk appealed on New Year's Eve for an end to the cycle of violence in which more than 13,000 people have been killed since he unbanned black opposition groups and began dismantling apartheid in February, 1990.

"We must do more to bring it to an end," Mr. de Klerk told a nation mourning four people killed by black gunmen at a Cape Town pub just before midnight Thursday and more than 3,200 other victims of political violence in 1993.

He urged tolerance and national reconciliation, saying 1994 would be the start of a new era in South Africa.

Pathetic Lao forces. Officially, only two U.S. officers are known to have been held by Pathet Lao rebels, both men Col. Charles Shelton and Lt. Col. David Hudlock — died in captivity in the 1960s. But 500 reels of microfilm documents — made available at the Library of Congress in recent months — provide some support for those who believe the number once held in Laos was perhaps as high as 41, the Post said.

Although the evidence is inconclusive, the documents from the State Department, CIA and Defence Intelligence Agency support earlier testimony by senior Nixon administration officials that they feared at the time that U.S. prisoners had been left behind, but they decided there was little they could do about it.

Of the 501 Americans released by North Vietnam in 1973, only nine had been captured in Laos. They were held by the North Vietnamese, and not by the Pathet Lao.

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U.S. knew of PoWs in Laos — report

WASHINGTON (AP) — Newly declassified documents show the United States had information that suggested some downed American pilots being held prisoner in Laos were not released at the end of the Vietnam War, the Washington Post reported in Sunday's editions.

The Defence Department officially lists 333 Americans as missing in action in Laos. Most of them probably were killed when their aircraft crashed, and others may have been killed by the pro-Communist

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Jordan to host 8th regional bridge championship in 1995

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordanian capital is set to become the bridge centre of the region when it hosts the 8th Bridge Federation of Africa, Asia and the Middle East (BFAAME) Championship in April-May 1995.

The internationally popular intellectual card game, officially first introduced in Jordan in 1979, has been steadily drawing a large number of players and fans in the Kingdom — a fact that led the World Bridge Federation (WBF) and the BFAAME council to accept the Jordan Bridge Association's (JBA) bid following WBF Vice President Mazhar Jafri's visit to Jordan last week to examine facilities and arrangements.

"I believe the JBA is fully capable of earning wide support to ensure a successful championship," Mr. Jafri told the Jordan Times.

"The JBA is well-organised, and I was pleasantly surprised — Jordan's bridge club is probably the best of the zone," he added.

The WBF now has 94 member countries, represented by their national federations.

The member countries have been divided into seven zones: North America; Europe; South America; Africa, Asia and Middle East; Central America and the Caribbean, the Far East and the Pacific.

Jordan is a member of the Africa, Asia and Middle East zone which also includes Bangladesh, Botswana, Egypt, India, Kenya, Kuwait, Mauritius, Nepal, Morocco, Pakistan, Reunion Island, Saudi Arabia, S. Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

Competitions organised by WBF include the Bridge Olympiad, held in an Olympic year, in which every country can compete, and the World Championship, better known as the Bermuda Bowl and the Venice Cup, in which only qualifying teams from zonal competitions can take part.

The zonal biennial championship due to be held in Amman in 1995 will enable the top two teams of the open as well as the women's events to qualify for the World Championship due to be held in Beijing in Sept. 1995.

Mr. Jafri told the Jordan Times that he had, on behalf of the WBF, moved the Olympic Council of Asia and



World Bridge Federation Vice President Mazhar Jafri receives a shield from Jordan Bridge Federation's Honorary President, Mrs. Nawzat Shaher

the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for the recognition of the intellectual game of bridge as an approved sport and said that he was hopeful of the possibility of a favourable outcome by the end of the year.

"An IOC recognition will very much enhance the status of bridge as a mental game. I see no reason that could prevent bridge from becoming an official sport because it fulfils the basic requirements stipulated by the IOC charter: 'It is competitive and enhances friendship and goodwill among nations,'" he noted.

He said that WBF was now

providing textbooks to teach bridge and that many countries were making bridge part of school curricula after recognising the game as a mental sport.

"You know, the fact that it is a card game should not belittle its status. Chinese leader Deng Xio Ping once said 'when people see me swimming they think I'm physically fit, by when they hear of me playing bridge they think I'm mentally fit'."

During his visit to Jordan, Mr. Jafri met Minister of Youth Abdullah Oweidat and JBA Honorary President Mrs. Nawzat Shaher.

Mr. Ghassan Ghanem, Jordan's representative in the BFAAME said that the JBA would now exert all efforts to ensure the championship's success.

"We are very much encouraged by Mr. Jafri's visit. We will now look for all kinds of sponsors and form committees to oversee the details of the championship," he said.

Mr. Ghanem noted that the number of bridge players in the country was rising constantly ever since the JBA was formed and accredited by the Ministry of Youth in 1979.

"We had 70 players when the JBA was first founded. Now we have over 400 registered members and we are hopeful many more people will learn and appreciate the game in years to come," he added.



Jordan Bridge Federation (JBA) President Bahjat Majali signs an agreement to host the 8th Bridge Federation of Africa, Asia and the Middle East Championship in Amman in 1995. Also present are JBA Vice President Ghassan Ghanem (left) and World Bridge Federation Vice President Mazhar Jafri

Unseeded Germans knock out S. Africa in Hopman Cup

PERTH, Australia (AFP) — Giantkillers Germany became Sunday the second team to eliminate seeded opposition from the Hopman Cup tennis mixed team tournament when they knocked out South Africa.

Bernd Karbacher and Anke Huber defeated the eighth-seeded South Africans Marcos Ondruska and Amanda Coetzer on the third day of the 760,000 dollar Australian (\$540,000) 12-nation contest.

Huber gave the Germans a flying start, beating Coetzer 7-6 (7/4), 3-6, 6-1 in a fiercely contested three-set thriller that lasted two hours, 12 minutes.

Then Karbacher ensured his country a place in the quarter-finals when he overcame Ondruska 6-4, 6-1 in only 77 minutes.

South Africa secured a consolation prize when Ondruska and Coetzer defeated the German pair 8-7 in a mixed doubles pro set.

Germany now clash with the powerful second-seeded United States' pairing of Ivan Lendl and Mary Joe Fernandez Tuesday night.

Germany won the competition last year when they were represented by Michael Stich and Steffi Graf, but with the superstars unavailable to defend the title, they were not even seeded this year.

Karbacher conceded that the U.S. pair would be formidable opponents.

"I have never played Lendl before. But he is not used to playing in mixed doubles and anything can happen," he said.

"Perhaps our best chance of beating the U.S. is to win both singles clashes. So there is no pressure on us in the mixed doubles," added Huber.

Ondruska said he and Coetzer had been "very nervous" before their match with the Germans, which got them off

to a slow start.

In the women's singles, Huber was fully extended to overcome the tenacious Coetzer.

The 19-year-old German, ranked 10th in the world, threatened to overwhelm the South African, ranked 15th, racing to a 3-0 lead in the opening set after breaking Coetzer's service in the first and third games.

But Coetzer, a short, stocky and fiercely determined player, rallied in dazzling style, breaking Huber's service three times to lead at 6-5. Huber levelled at 6-6 and, in the tie-breaker, remained steadier to clinch the set.

Coetzer's fighting qualities shone through in the second set, in which she broke Huber's service in the first, third and seventh games, and it was not until the deciding set that a more confident Huber established domination.

The cool Karbacher, with a world ranking of 54, always appeared to have the measure of Ondruska (ranked 40th) in the men's singles.

Switzerland also moved into the quarter-finals of the Hopman Cup tournament Sunday when they knocked The Netherlands out of the 12-nation contest.

Jakob Hlasek and Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere gave Switzerland an unassailable lead at the Burswood Dome when they both won their singles matches.

Hlasek defeated Jan Siermink 4-6, 6-4, 7-5, and Maleeva-Fragniere overcame Miriam Oremans 3-6, 6-3, 6-0.

Switzerland, for whom Hlasek and Maleeva-Fragniere won the Hopman Cup two years ago, now clash with the top-seeded Czech Republic pair, Petr Korda and Jana Novotna, Tuesday.

Chinese golden girls fail to clean up swimming gold

HONG KONG (AFP) — China's women swimmers took three gold medals to increase their gold medal tally at the Epson Short-Course Swimming World Cup Sunday but the result still fell short of expectations.

Chinese swimmer Le Jingye — holder of short-course world records in the 50-metre and 100m freestyle events — easily took the 100m freestyle title to add to the two golds she won Saturday.

But, despite more golds from Dai Guohong and Lou Xia in the 200m and 50m breaststroke events respectively, the second day of this two-day meet was marked by disappointment for the Chinese women.

Pre-meet favourite Dai — winner of four golds at the Short-Course World Championships in Palma De Mallorca in early December — was

disqualified for a false start in the final of the 50m butterfly, which was won by Angela Kennedy of Australia.

After a strong showing Saturday, Australia's women swimmers continued to threaten China's dominance Sunday in the women's events as Elli Overton brought her medal gold medal tally to four, with wins in the 100m and 400m individual medleys.

Meanwhile, Australia's Mark Kowalski won the gruelling 800m freestyle marathon by more than seven seconds to help bring Australia's gold medal total to six.

The men's results were mixed, with the Russians performing strongly, but without a hoped-for record breaking swim from Alexandre Popov, who shaved 0.11 seconds off the 100m short-course with a time of 47.83 seconds Saturday.

In a hotly contested 50m freestyle final, Lithuanian Raimundas Majuolis edged Popov out by 0.4 seconds to win his country's only gold of the tournament.

While Popov failed to take a gold Sunday, Vladimir Selkov, Denis Pakratov and Vladimir Pysheko combined for a gold medal triple haul in the 200 m backstroke, 100m butterfly and 200m freestyle.

Nina Jivaneskaya added to the Russian tally with victory in the women's 100m back-

stroke event.

Christian Keller of Germany staked his claim as an individual medley specialist, winning the men's 200m title, after taking golds in the 100m and 400m individual medley categories.

Compatriot Dagmar Hase won a powerful victory in the women's 400m freestyle to bring Germany's gold medal total to five, with Dane Mette Jacobsen winning Denmark's only gold with a win in the women's 200m butterfly.

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2. Third floor, unfurnished flat, consists of 3 bedrooms, a salon, dining room, sitting room, 3 bathrooms, separate central heating, with lift. The building is located in Rabbieh District, near the Chinese Embassy.
Please call tel. 811875

Foreign footballers scandal takes new turn in S. Africa

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — The foreign footballers scandal rocking South Africa has taken a new turn with a Liberian admitting he played here for two seasons under a false name.

Former national striker Friday Roberts fled the war-ravaged West African nation in 1991 to join Bloemfontein Celtic, a first division club from Orange Free State province. Celtic officials repeatedly

denied media claims that the Liberian was a foreigner, and he became an established first-team player using the name Williams.

But Roberts, who previously for mighty Barolle of Monrovia, admitted Sunday that Celtic brought him into the country illegally and changed his name.

South Africa permits clubs to register five foreigners and field three, rules which some

clubs allegedly break by altering players' names and giving them fake identity documents.

Responding to frequent

press reports of abuse, National Football Association officials launched an inquiry and the findings should be released during January.

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A Wheel Drive (land rover discovery, Mitsubishi-pajero, Toyota land cruiser) or similar
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Please Specify Mileage & other details. send offers before 10/1/94 to: I.T.C. project/Mr. CIMINO p.o. Box (9800) Jebel Wehdeh - Amman

FURNISHED FIRST FLOOR FOR RENT
Consists of 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, main hall open to the dining hall and an open, spacious veranda, with sitting room adjoining a closed in veranda, study, maid room, spacious kitchen open to a veranda. The verandas overlook a garden. Garage with separate entrance and a garden.
Location: Jabal Amman, 4th Circle, near the Kuwaiti Embassy in the embassies district, the house is suitable for an embassy or a family.
Those interested call tel. 676885 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. for three days

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A law firm composed of several lawyers requires an efficient secretary with the following qualifications:
1. Fluency in written and spoken English and Arabic.
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A DELUXE FURNISHED FLAT FOR RENT
Consists of 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, spacious salons, maid's room, two glassed-in verandas, telephone and other utilities.
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FOR RENT
Luxurious Furnished Flat
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First floor separated - net area of (260) square meters.
Fully furnished. 4 bedrooms "one master", 2 large salons (living, dining, & family) ALL CARPETED.
Glassed in Veranda. Modern Kitchen. Washing room. 3 bath rooms. Separated central heating. telephone.
Colour T.V., video, F.M + T.V central line, Electric appliances. Lift. (RENT NEGOTIABLE).
PLEASE CALL TEL: 861246

GOREN BRIDGE
WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSCH
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WHERE HAVE ALL THE LOSERS GONE?
Both vulnerable, South deals.
NORTH
♠ K Q 8 4
♥ A 2
♦ K 4
♣ 8 5
WEST
♠ A 6 5
♥ J 10 7 6
♦ Q 8 6 5 3
♣ 2
EAST
♠ J 10 2
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♦ J 10 9 2
♣ A K 10 9 3
SOUTH
♠ 7 3
♥ Q 9 8 5 4
♦ A
♣ Q 8 7 4
The bidding:
South West North East
1♣ Pass 1♠ Pass
2♥ Pass 4♥ Pass
Opening lead: Two of ♠
It is easier for declarer, who sees all his side's assets, to read the opening lead than it is for the leader's partner, who has only one hand and dummy to work with. That affords declarer opportunities for deceptive plays which pose real problems for the defenders.
This deal is from a club tournament in Buffalo, N.Y. Sitting North-South were Jim Mathis and Gerald Fried. Since South's two-heart rebid promised a six-card suit,

CONCORD
Tel.: 677420
CONCORD '1' SOMMERBY
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30
CONCORD '2' BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 4:45, 6:30
Hi America Play, 8:30

PLAZA
Tel.: 699238
Ahmad Zaki and Mahmoud Hamideh in
AL BASHA
(ARABIC)
Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30
daily at 11:00 a.m.
HOME ALONE "2"

PHILADELPHIA
Tel.: 634144
Demy Moore ... in THE BUTCHER'S WIFE
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30
Special show for children on Thu., Fri., Sat., Sun., at 11:00 a.m.
NINJA DRAGONS

Nabil Al Mashini Theatre
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presents a play entitled:
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A popular political comedy
Actors: Abeer Issa, Daoud Jalajel, Hassan Al Shaer, Fuad Shomali in addition to other comedians
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AHLAN THEATRE
The political comedy
WELCOME ARAB SUMMIT
Daily 8:30 p.m.
The theatre closes Saturday and Sunday
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The Theatre will be closed from Dec. 24, 1993 until further notice.

Reformist team heads for talks with PLO chief

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A group of Palestinian activists seeking reforms in the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) left for Tunis Sunday for talks with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

The team is led by Haidar Abdul Shafi, who served as the head of the PLO-guided negotiators in the 26-month-old peace talks with Israel, and includes members of the Palestine People's Party and the Palestinian Democratic Movement (PDM) as well as independents.

Their meeting with Mr. Arafat, expected to begin late Sunday, came in response to several months of intense campaigning and a petition to the PLO chairman expressing discontent with the way he was handling PLO decision-making and negotiations with Israel on the implementation of the Sept. 13 autonomy accord.

"The delegation is going to Tunis with an open mind, but the main objective of the visit is to ensure that Mr. Arafat changes his autocratic style," said a source close to reformist camp.

"We hope Arafat would live up to whatever he agrees at the meeting and would not return to his ways of promising something and doing something else," added the source, who preferred anonymity.

Unlike headline PLO factions and activists who oppose the autonomy accord, the reformers endorse the autonomy agreement but argue that the PLO chairman's approach to peace-making could undermine the Palestinians' quest for statehood by depriving their representative organisation of credibility in the international scene.

Several members of the Palestinian peace negotiating team and their advisers as well as leading personalities from the occupied territories and the diaspora have joined the reformers.

Mr. Arafat, who has been ignoring earlier efforts by the reformist camp, agreed to meeting the delegation after he came under heavy pressure from within the PLO Executive Committee.

Taysir Arouri, a member

of the delegation which left for Tunis Sunday, said early this month: "It is time the PLO leadership realised that building a state is different from running a revolutionary movement."

The reference included an argument that Mr. Arafat, having secured international support and pledges of financial support for his peace moves with Israel, risked losing the backing if he continued to apply political considerations rather than individual qualifications and expertise in naming people to key jobs in setting up Palestinian infrastructure.

Dr. Abdul Shafi, quoted by Reuters, said: "We are determined to see that there is a positive response. It is not a challenge to Arafat's leadership. We want his leadership to be based on a more secure broad-based decision-making basis."

The Gaza-based physician, who criticises the autonomy accord saying it falls short of Palestinian aspirations, said the timing of the meeting with Mr. Arafat was more pressing than ever as the negotiating process opened "the possibility of assuming responsibilities for running our own civil affairs."

"Our demand is that Arafat commits himself to democratic principles by seeking competent Palestinians and not by sacrificing qualifications for political considerations," he said.

In addition to Dr. Abdul Shafi and Dr. Arouri, the delegation includes Nabil Amer, a former PLO envoy and Arafat confidant, and activists Abdul Hafez Ashab, Ghazi Khalil, Tawfiq Abu Bakr, and Ibrahim Abu Ayash.

During his three-day stay in Amman after arriving from the West Bank, Dr. Abdul Shafi met with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali and several Palestinian figures in Jordan.

In a statement to the Jordanian News Agency, Petra, Dr. Abdul Shafi stressed the need for enhancing Jordanian-Palestinian coordination "particularly at this time when the peace talks are passing through a genuine crisis," which requires closer Arab coordination to "secure Arab rights and interests."



PROTEST: Palestinian women shout at Israeli troops shot and wounded at least six Palestinians, including a pregnant woman (AFP photo)

Defence concludes argument in assassination plot trial

AMMAN (AP) — Defence lawyers Sunday rested their case in the trial of 10 Jordanians accused of plotting to kill King Hussein, rejecting pre-trial confessions and demanding the conditional release of the defendants.

Defence lawyer Omar Dhamra, reading a 150-page summation, argued that the confessions were extracted under torture and as such could not be admitted as evidence.

He demanded that the court return an innocent verdict and release the defendants.

The State Security Court, a three-man military tribunal, will hold a "final review" of the case Jan. 9 and set a date for issuing the verdict, prosecution sources said.

Under standing orders of the court, the defendants and witnesses could not be identified by name in media reports. Two of the accused are being tried in absentia.

Five military cadets, a member of a guard unit of King Hussein and four others, including the two fugitives, are charged with plotting to assassinate the monarch and pave the way for a take-over of power by the illegal Hezb Al Tahrir group.

Hezb Al Tahrir, a puritan group established in the early 50s, does not recognise any of the existing Arab governments and call for the establishment of an Islamic caliphate.

The prosecution charges that the five cadets, students at Muta University, a military college in south Jordan, were enlisted by Hezb Al Tahrir to

open fire at the King during a guard of honour at a Muta graduation ceremony on June 26.

The students were told that as soon as the King was killed, pre-positioned Hezb Al Tahrir members were to take over radio and television stations and seize power, according to prosecutor Muhammad Hijazi, an army major.

Mr. Dhamra and other defence lawyers who addressed the court last week summed up that the accused were subject to "severe physical torture and psychological duress" to force them into signing the confessions.

The statements, given by the eight accused during three months of detention at the intelligence department, are one of the pillars of the prosecution's case.

All the defendants on court retraced the confessions and entered innocent pleas at the outset of the trial, which began in September.

The defence has also argued that Hezb Al Tahrir did not espouse violence as a means to achieve its objective, and as such the prosecution charges based on the group's ideology were invalid.

Prosecution witnesses have testified that the five cadets were devout Muslims who resented the pro-Western "un-Islamic" policies of the government.

They also told the court that the five were ardent admirers of Lieutenant Khaled Al Islambouly, who assassinated Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak during a Cairo military parade in October 1981.

Balladur chided for sending Iranians to Tehran

PARIS (R) — France's popular conservative Prime Minister Edouard Balladur faced harsh words Sunday for flying two suspected Iranian assassins home to safety instead of handing them over to the Swiss justice.

Paris' decision to reject a Swiss extradition request for the pair against the advice of its own courts brought criticism from the French and Iranian opposition as well as from victims of pro-Iranian attacks that terrorised France in the 1980s.

"Terrorism is international yet we're now refusing to cooperate with Swiss justice," said Francoise Rudetzi, maimed in a 1986 bombing in Paris by guerrillas and now head of an association of victims of such attacks.

The opposition socialists said the decision was "incoherent and deplorably inconsequential."

Mohsen Sharif-Esfahani and Ahmad Taheri were taken from jail and flown home secretly last week despite a French court ruling in February in favour of their extradition to Switzerland.

Mr. Balladur made the move public in a terse statement on Thursday, two days after the flight.

"The French authorities have decided not to extradite (the two) for reasons involving national interest. No further comment will be made on this affair," a statement from his office said.

Asked to offer some explanation during a television talk-show on Sunday, European Affairs Minister Alain Lamassouse said: "At times brevity is best."

Refusing further comment, he said on France 2: "In the war on international terrorism, the least said is the better."

Officials and police chiefs too remained silent. "One can only presume a serious threat has been made," a French official, who asked not to be identified, told Reuters.

Arrested at Bern's request in Paris in November 1992, the men were wanted for the 1990 murder in Geneva of leading Iranian dissident Kazem Rajavi, brother of Massoud Rajavi, who heads Iran's Mujahedeen-e-Khalq guerrilla movement, based in Iraq.

In an unusually sharp statement, Switzerland described the move as "disconcerting" and lodged a formal protest "against this breaking of the European extradition accord."

"Tension with Iran is undoubtedly more dangerous than tension with Switzerland," quipped the daily Le Monde newspaper.

"But appearing to cave in to the threat of terrorism is certainly not the best way to fight it."

Newspaper across the political spectrum saw Paris' decision as the latest twist in a decade of rocky ties with Iran's fundamentalist leaders in which successive French governments had capitulated too often and perhaps to no avail.

The mass-circulation conservative daily, France-Soir, called it "a strange gift from Paris to Tehran." The popular Le Parisien described the move as "astonishing."

It said that the tough-talking conservatives, who have rounded up scores of suspected Algerian fundamentalists and Kurdish separatists in the past few weeks, were compromising their own promises of muscle on the law and order front.

Sudan says British envoy worked against Khartoum

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — Sudan has accused the British ambassador ordered to leave the country of working directly against the interests of the Khartoum government.

But a "highly-placed political source" hinted in a report in the government newspaper Al Ingaz Al Watani that the expulsion could be reversed if Britain understood why it was ordered.

The unnamed official told the newspaper Ambassador Peter Streams was responsible for the failure of Sudan's efforts to improve ties with the West.

The report on Sunday contained no specific examples of how Mr. Streams allegedly undermined his host state.

The official also said the expulsion had nothing to do with the ambassador's contacts with prominent Sudanese opposition leaders or controversy over a visit by the archbishop of Canterbury, spiritual leader of the Anglican faith.

Military ruler Omar Hassan Al Bashir said on Saturday the aim of expelling Mr. Streams was to show Britain that Sudan was no longer part of the British empire.

"You have heard through the media that we have asked Britain, the colonial state, to recall its ambassador in Khartoum because he interfered in and encroached on what did not concern him," Lieutenant-General Bashir said in a speech to mark the 38th anniversary of independence.

"We wanted it as a lesson for them (the British)... that we are independent and will not permit anyone to harm our independence," he added.

Sudan said on Thursday it was giving Mr. Streams two weeks to leave the country. Britain has given Sudan until Tuesday to reverse the decision (see page 2).

The Sudanese government earlier blamed Streams for the cancellation of a visit to northern Sudan by Archbishop George Carey, who decided to visit only the rebel-controlled south.

The archbishop said on Friday the decision was his alone and he was sad about the expulsion.

The government newspaper said the ambassador's expulsion came after a long study of his behaviour.

Britain has threatened a tit-for-tat expulsion of Sudan's ambassador to London if Khartoum's order stands. But Sudan has since moved its envoy, Ali Mohammad Osman Yassin, to New York where he is now Sudan's permanent representative at the United Nations. His replacement in London has not been named.

Ties with Eritrea

Sudan denied Sunday a charge by Eritrea that invaders launched an attack on it from Sudanese soil last month.

Al Ingaz Al Watani quoted an unidentified senior official as saying the charges were unfounded, and Sudan had no interest in changing the government in Eritrea or in carrying out hostile acts against it.

Sudan has faced charges by the West and its northern neighbour, Egypt of harbouring militants with backing by Iran.

President Isaias Aferwerki of Eritrea said Saturday that 20 invaders from Sudan, led by an Eritrean military commander, were killed in a shootout Dec. 16. He said they included Moroccans, Tunisians and Pakistanis, and were part of a holy war movement.

The attack had not been publicised at the time, but Mr. Aferwerki said there had been similar clashes along the border in a bid by fundamentalists to overthrow his government.

But, Al Ingaz Al Watani quoted the Sudanese official as saying: "There is no foundation for such allegations. It would be better to look for the real reasons of such tension."

The official pointed out that more than 500,000 Eritrean refugees were being sheltered in Sudan, under the supervision of Sudanese security forces.

Jordan-Qatar reconciliation sealed

(Continued from page 1)

quest for a negotiated settlement with Israel based on the return of the Kingdom's territory occupied by the Jewish state and restoration of Jordan's water right.

Sheikh Hamad told Sunday's press conference that his country was seeking to end the rifts in the Arab World caused by the Gulf crisis, but it would be some time before the Arab countries would be able to settle their differences.

"Arab reconciliation needs time and it will take place in stages before Arabs can sit down at one table again and start a frank dialogue," he said.

In unusually frank and unambiguous comments for a Gulf minister, Sheikh Hamad said Qatar's decision to send him to Amman on an official visit was "taken at the highest level" and that the visit had "removed all differences" between Amman and Doha.

He expressed hope that Qatar's partners in the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) would also follow Doha's example and seek to heal the strain in relations.

Asserting Doha's independent policy, Sheikh Hamad said that if other Arab countries "are not happy with our visit to Jordan... then that is their problem."

The Qatari minister called on Arab states to end their ostracism of Iraq because Iraq "is an important country in the Arab World and it is imperative to remove all misunderstandings that mar Arab relations."

Unlike its GCC partners, Qatar sent back its ambassador to Baghdad shortly after the Gulf war over Kuwait. A senior Qatari defence official visited the Iraqi capital last month, triggering a protest from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Doha rejected the criticism.

Sheikh Hamad said Qatar was in no position to immediately resume aid to Jordan because of its own financial difficulties and the depression in international oil prices.

He criticised unnamed members of the Organisation of Petroleum Export Countries (OPEC) for overproduction, in violation of OPEC quotas, leading to the decline in oil prices.

"I believe that the barter deals reached by some OPEC members outside OPEC agreements should be immediately stopped and that these countries should abide by the OPEC quotas," he said.

Sheikh Hamad, in the first such comment by a Gulf official, said his country was ready to normalise relations with Israel if progress was achieved in the Middle East peace process.

Confirming that he met with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres on the fringes of the 1993 session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, Sheikh Hamad said he told Peres that his country was not ready to sign any agreement or cooperate with Israel "before progress is reached in the... peace negotiations."

He said while Qatar was ready to lift the boycott of international firms dealing with Israel as soon as the peace talks make progress, it also believed that the general boycott of the Jewish state should be lifted only after the 23-member Arab League adopts a formal resolution to do so.

Sheikh Hamad criticised Arab countries for their reticence to contact Israel and also rejection of negotiations with the Jewish state in Arab capitals.

"If they could meet in Washington, Moscow and Peking, why not in Arab countries?" he asked. "It is a psychological problem..."

Israel insists PLO accept paper

(Continued from page 1)

might take several more weeks. "There is no way back. This process is irreversible," said Education Minister Amnon Rubinstein.

Mr. Rabin told his ministers Sunday that Mr. Arafat demanded that the Jericho area be expanded to include a strip of beach on the Dead Sea and

a Jordan River site, Maghas, where tradition says Jesus was baptised, Israel Radio reports said.

In an interview with Al Quds newspaper, Dr. Shaath said Palestinian negotiators trying to expand the size of the area under their control as much as possible had focused on at least three historic sites around Jericho.

COLUMN

U.S.'s wealthiest bachelor marries

LANAI, Hawaii (R) — Bill Gates, chairman of Microsoft Corp and America's wealthiest bachelor, married his longtime girlfriend on this exclusive island Saturday surrounded by family and billionaire friends.

Gates, the nation's second-richest person with a net worth of at least \$6 billion, married Melinda French, a Microsoft marketing manager from Dallas, a source, who asked not to be named told Reuters. The wedding took place on a spit of land overlooking the blue waters of the Pacific at the plush Manele Bay Hotel golf resort on the island just west of Maui, the source said. Erin Carney, a spokeswoman for Microsoft, said news organisations would be given written confirmation of the wedding but said a company statement might not be released until later Sunday, when an official photograph also would be distributed.

Among the approximately 130 guests expected at the celebration were Nebraska investor Warren Buffett, the only American wealthiest than Gates, and two other Microsoft billionaires, Executive Vice-President Steve Ballmer and company co-founder Paul Allen. The Rev. William Sullivan, a Jesuit priest who is president of Seattle University, performed the ceremony.

Monk uses fire engine to sprinkle holy water

BANGKOK (R) — A Buddhist monk in northeastern Thailand used a fire engine to spray 2,500 litres (660 gallons) of holy water on thousands of followers to bless them for the new year. A source in the firemen's office in Nakorn Ratchasima 260 kilometres north of Bangkok, told Reuters by phone that Phra Koon, 71, well known for his beliefs in black magic and superstitions, borrowed a fire engine for the ceremony. About 10,000 people gathered in front of the provincial hall as Phra Koon prepared the holy water, loaded it in the fire engine and turned the hose on followers. Some Buddhist monks who believe in black magic say the holy water protects followers against bad spirits and brings good luck. Last August, when the Royal Plaza Hotel collapsed in Nakorn Ratchasima, killing 137 people and injuring more than 200 others, Phra Koon performed similar rites at the scene which some rescuers said hampered their work.

Hearing set for Reynolds, Anderson divorce case

JUPITER, Fla. (R) — Actress Loni Anderson claims she is nearly broke and needs temporary alimony from her estranged husband Burt Reynolds to maintain her affluent lifestyle court documents show. Lawyers for the couple are scheduled to appear in state court Monday for the first in a series of hearings in the high-profile divorce case. The pair of celebrities own a ranch in south Florida and made frequent appearances on behalf of local charities until they filed for divorce last June. Anderson, 47, claims she entered the marriage in 1988 with \$1 million in cash. She earned about \$1.7 million during the marriage, but spent all the money on marital living expenses and child care for the couple's adopted five-year-old son, Quinton, according to court records. One of Reynolds' attorneys disputed the portrayal of Anderson as on the verge of homelessness. "This is just not a situation where she is destitute and requires payment," Stuart Attorney Noel Bobko said. "She is gainfully employed and doing very well." The documents did not specify how much money in alimony Anderson is seeking. "During the marriage, the parties enjoyed a prosperous lifestyle, with homes in Florida, North Carolina and California," Anderson's attorneys said in documents filed in Martin County Court, where the couple's divorce case is pending. In addition to alimony, the blond former star of television show WKRP in Cincinnati is asking that Reynolds pay her attorney fees and experts needed to prepare for the divorce trial including accountants and real estate appraisers and a bankruptcy attorney. A California judge ordered Reynolds, 57, to pay temporary child support after Reynolds, star of the television show "Evening Shade," filed for divorce in Florida.

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